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LESSONS OF PAST TIMES;

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY

OF

38

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY

B. G. G. GERVINUS.

WITH A BRIEF NOTICE OF THE AUTHOR.



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LIFE OF GERVINUS,

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

 E pur si muove. — GALILEO.

GEORGE GOTTFRIED GERVINUS was born in the beginning of the present century, at Darmstadt (the Grand Duchy of Hesse), where he was in early life apprenticed to a mercer, who had a small retail business in that city. A taste for reading led him to the study of history, and, having accumulated sufficient money to defray the expenses of his education, he removed to Heidelberg, where he studied with such success, that, after taking his degree, he became a teacher and lecturer in the University (*Privatdocent*). He soon after married a young lady, one of his pupils, who, possessed of a considerable fortune, secured for him an independence, which his previous circumstances rendered very acceptable. As a lecturer, he did not meet with much success, his delivery being careless, his articulation indistinct, and the students at that time not having in general much taste for the higher branches of philosophy. When Gervinus had attained his thirtieth year (about 1835) he was called to Göttingen, where the merits of his literary and historical attainments were first acknowledged.

Here he lived for two years in the enjoyment of a happy domestic life, and of the esteem and respect of the whole University, when a political event occurred which brought with it a severe trial to his independent spirit.

Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland and King of Hanover (whose well-known political career in England, as a high Tory of the old school, had already prepared Germany for his despotic views), abolished the Hanoverian constitution in 1837, and demanded from the professors of the University of Göttingen an oath of allegiance to his absolute sovereignty. Seven of the professors, and among them Gervinus, entered

an energetic protest against this illegal usurpation of authority ; upon this, Gervinus, with Jacob Grimm and Dahlmann, were not only deprived of their professorships, but ordered to leave Göttingen, and were followed into banishment by many of the students.

After several years of retirement, Gervinus was invited to Heidelberg in 1844-45, as Honorary Professor of History, and excited a prodigious sensation by his lectures on the political state of Europe. In the Revolution of 1848 he was counted among the leaders of the constitutional party, and continued its faithful champion when he was elected a member of the German Parliament (at Frankfort on the Maine). Though not a great orator, he exerted considerable influence over those who were commissioned to draw up the constitution for the German Empire, in which the imperial crown was offered to the King of Prussia. His eyes were subsequently opened to this error, by the exposure of the various political evasions and the conduct of the governing powers of Germany. This alteration in his views occasioned a difference of opinion between him and many of his old friends ; but the first open avowal of his conversion is contained in the work before us. It might perhaps, at first sight, appear surprising that one whose authority on the science of history has been so long and so generally looked up to in Germany, should have been led into such an error, but there are too many examples of the kind, whose explanation we must seek in the present state of moral and political development in Germany—a country where oppressive rulers, supported by large standing armies, have deprived the people of the means of acquiring a practical knowledge of self-government and political independence, while the powers of thought and inquiry (which no earthly sovereign can restrain) have enabled them, in the free investigation of religion and philosophy, to lead the way in the path of European literature, and to learn by the experience of past history that which their rulers would prevent them from learning by their own.

The writings of Gervinus are, in chronological sequence, as follows:—

Two volumes of Essays—The article on Macchiavelli's 'Principe' is the most remarkable Essay in this collection ;

The History of Literature in Germany up to the death of Goethe, in five volumes ;

A short apologetical treatise on the Reformed Catholic Church ;

A work in three volumes on the writings of Shakespeare ;

And lastly, the Introduction to his History of the Nineteenth Century which is before us.

This Introduction had scarcely appeared, when the government of the Grand Duchy of Baden, with most of the other governments of Germany, condemned the work as an act of high treason.

On the 24th of February of the present year (1853) Professor Gervinus accordingly was brought to trial at Mannheim, upon an indictment charging him with having published a work directed against constitutional monarchy, with the intention of deposing the lawful head of the state, and of changing and endangering the constitution ; thereby rendering himself amenable to the charge of disturbing public tranquillity and order, and incurring the guilt of high treason.

Notwithstanding the severity of the weather, many of the most distinguished members of the University of Heidelberg, besides the most eminent jurists and others from the Palatinate, Würtemberg, and Hesse, were present ; but the chamber (selected in preference to others of larger dimensions in the court-house) could only contain about three hundred persons.

After the accusation had been read, and the cause pleaded on both sides, Professor Gervinus rose, and, commencing with a few preliminary observations, referring to the speeches of those who had preceded him, continued his defence as follows :—

“ The charge preferred against me is in its nature absurd, since, from whatever side it is regarded, it must fail in its aim ; partly because it attempts to strike that which is beyond its reach, partly, because it strikes that which is within its reach a harder blow than was intended. The charge, although in its commencement it appears directed against me, is, in fact, an accusation against Providence, or, let us say, History, which cannot be condemned. The charge makes no distinction between the objective facts propounded in my

work, and subjective opinions, theories, and speculations. I only relate facts. I offer nothing purely theoretical or speculative, and as few opinions and conclusions as can possibly be given in a historical narrative. The work finally reaches a period when the Present and the Future become its subject, and when therefore it can no longer relate any events of history which have been completed; and is confined to the simple statement of *the Fact* that opposite opinions exist, and may yet be advanced, concerning the problem of the Future. These opinions are themselves weighed against one another, but their value is not determined by dogmas, or phrases, or declamations, but simply by facts. If the balance incline towards a more liberal form of government, towards democratic institutions, and therefore towards self-government, and the participation of the many rather than of the few in the affairs of the state, I am not to blame, nor is it my ordinance, but that of History and of Providence. My work is only (what all historical narrative should be) a vindication of the decrees of Providence, and to revolt against them appears to me neither pious in a moral point of view, nor wise in a political. That which is proved by the most remarkable facts of History, will not be altered in the smallest degree, by the suppression of my work, or by my condemnation. The charge on this head is an absurdity, since no rational end can be attained by it. It aims at the suppression of a truth which, should *I* not tell it, will be ever louder and louder proclaimed by the *Facts of History*.

“It may be on the other hand asserted, that this charge is not against *History itself*, but against a written narrative, a representation, through which history is conveyed in the manner in which it is comprehended by a human understanding, subject to error, and by its errors (perhaps even by the truths involved in them) dangerous. But even when directed against an historical narrative, the charge continues to be a kind of absurdity, for it can no more impose silence on the philosophy of History, than on History itself. To believe such a thing possible is a proof how limited an idea exists of the eager inquiry going on after knowledge—and truth, the source and origin of all knowledge. There will always be so eager a demand for a history of the Present time, that, even should *I* be prevented, ten others would arise, only to

proclaim the louder, and to repeat the oftener, the truth which is here suppressed. To believe that the philosophy of History can be silenced by persecution, argues an entire ignorance even of the external mechanism of philosophy. A political pamphlet, intended to serve a particular purpose at a particular period, may be suppressed. The author of such a pamphlet, bent on agitation, can easily console himself for its suppression. It has cost him little time and trouble; it is only a means to an end, one means out of many means, any of which, when this is lost, will serve the author as well. But it is not thus with philosophical works, it is not thus with the work before me. This book is deeply rooted in the vocation of my whole life, and is the end of my philosophical research; I have prepared myself for it by the labour of years, and the labour of years will be necessary for its completion. I have reached a time of life when I can neither change my vocation, nor even cease to labour in this vocation. I am also so imbued with my philosophy, that even if I could change I would not. I may be hindered in the prosecution of this work for four months, but in the fifth I shall return to it. For a judicial sentence cannot arrest (like a mere pamphlet) the philosophical scheme interwoven into a whole existence.

“The absurdity of the charge, considered on this side, is even increased, since a degree of rigour, which cannot be avoided although not contemplated in the charge itself, is connected with its issue. The penalty which the high tribunal would pronounce upon me would be an imprisonment of four months, but it would at the same time pronounce a far severer sentence. If it is possible that this ‘Introduction’ can be condemned in Germany, that it can be prohibited, that by these means the work should be strangled in its birth, then the philosophy of history has no longer a place in Germany. The tribunal of Baden will have given the first blow, in pronouncing judgment on a matter which is purely philosophical, and Germany, whose freedom of philosophical research has been her pride and her boast, of which even the various administrations of the nation have never been jealous, will receive a shock such as she never before sustained. By thus impeding her freedom of action, it would be impossible for German philosophy to attempt to rival the works of the free nations abroad. For me, grown up

under happier auspices, accustomed to the independence of philosophical investigation, absorbed in active research after knowledge, and in the idea of fulfilling my vocation while labouring at the task before me, and which I intend shall occupy the remainder of my life,—for me that condemnation would comprise the hard alternative, either to renounce my vocation, or my Fatherland; both of which I believe I have not unworthily served, and hope to be enabled still further to serve.

“ To such inevitable rigour, which is neither contained in the law, nor intended by the accuser or the judge, is added in the present case another and a still greater; the charge treats my work as a pamphlet whose tendency is to occasion excitement; the tendency is described as if I would annihilate monarchy by a new revolution. But the pamphlet is rather an historical work, which, instead of having been written to create a temporary excitement, is interwoven with the whole system of my ideas, and has for years been laid before the world in my previous writings. In this system, one dogma, among many, takes the lead, as a maxim derived from experience,—that it is an impossibility, and therefore an act of insanity, to attempt to *make* a revolution; insanity to believe that individuals, or even thousands, could do that which *I*, by this charge, am accused of having done or intended to do. The conviction, the result of constant and invariable experience, that it is not only wrong and immoral, but that it is impossible, and therefore insanity, to attempt to make revolutions, can neither be changed nor laid aside; I must myself have been insane if I had striven after an acknowledged impossibility. I could fully demonstrate, by the contents of my works, that I have ever been consistent with this idea, which is peculiarly my own, and which should defend me against the possibility of that guilt attaching to me of which I am now accused. But the monstrous nature of the trial itself proves its absurdity, and is the reason why, although I might, I cannot refute it. It is impossible that in a few hours the judge could obtain a knowledge of my unfortunately voluminous writings. Extracts can prove nothing effectually; since they might be neutralized by other parts which are not cited. A perfect acquaintance with all my writings would be necessary to ascertain the certain proofs

of the impossibility of the guilt which is imputed to me, but such information cannot be expected in the judge. What a monstrous thing then is this tantalising situation of the accused, having the best proof in his hands by which to obtain his acquittal, knowing that it is in the hands of all the world, and yet that he is not able to avail himself of it.

“These are difficulties which, more or less, are connected with every action at law against the press, by which a genuine philosophical work is attacked, and which therefore have been combated by the judicial theorists of all times. Philosophical investigation should have no other form than that of philosophy itself; but in my case other and more serious difficulties have arisen, which characterise the whole proceeding still further as an absurdity. The work before us is a philosophical investigation interwoven into the life-long labours of the author, of which it only forms a part; the accuser of such a work, who is unacquainted with the collected researches of the accused, must therefore risk attacking something which he does not fully, or indeed cannot at all, comprehend. In such a case he will involuntarily, almost inevitably, be influenced by the voice of public criticism, and especially by that of newspaper hirelings, who at the outset have the field to themselves. It was thus in my case. My book is on so strictly a philosophical plan, and treats of such comprehensive historical questions, that, properly, no judgment of any value could be pronounced upon it but by the professed historian, of whom there are not two dozen in all Germany. Among them there has not, to this hour, been found one competent to give an opinion in a few weeks on a book which is the fruit of half a life. On the other hand, there was soon a whole set of fanatical partisans and obstreperous bunglers in a neighbouring press, who in eight days had condemned this work, in some instances, by calling it an historical commonplace, and in others, a political pamphlet with ‘*destructive tendencies*.’ At the same time, and in a manner easily accounted for, under the influence of such an expression of public opinion, and almost before any other could make itself heard, accusations were made against the book and it was confiscated. Let no one take it amiss if, in the urgency of my defence, I for a moment lay aside modesty, as far as such modesty might prove injurious to my

cause. My work demonstrates a law of historical development, which I do not claim as my property, or as originating in me, but which has been demonstrated more than two thousand years ago by the greatest thinker of all ages, derived from observations on the history of the Grecian State. To repeat a law which has been already demonstrated ought to appear but a trifling circumstance, and indeed might merit the term of an historical commonplace: we could even suppose that it might be mentioned in a popular as well as in a philosophical book. Nevertheless this law has scarcely been twice repeated in the course of two thousand years, and then only by two imitators, who scarcely understood its whole purport, though they were the most thinking heads of the most thinking nations—Macchiavelli in Italy, and Hegel in Germany. I solemnly ask of the whole philosophical world if my words can be gainsaid, and to name for me the third, by whom the Aristotelian law, of which I speak, has been repeated and understood. I have ventured to consider the thought of Aristotle, and to apply it to the history of modern European states, and I found it confirmed by a series of developments which have occupied two thousand years. I also found that the whole series of events confirmatory of this law (itself deduced from experience) are not yet entirely fulfilled. Like the astronomer, who, from a known fraction of the path of a newly discovered planet, calculates its whole course, I ventured to divine that which is still wanting, and which may yet take centuries to complete. I turned silently to those whose profession was the study of history, to prove the justice of my calculations; I handed my book over to coming generations and coming centuries, with the silent demand, when the required series of events shall be fulfilled, then to pronounce the final sentence, whether this law, and its purport as now explained, be just or not. This is the philosophical character, and these the contents of my book—no more than was indispensably necessary to make this calculation. And now comes the charge, and pronounces that, in the character of a pamphleteer, I have endeavoured to excite a revolution in the Grand Duchy of Baden, or in the German Confederation. I hope the high tribunal is convinced that I had some ground for meeting this accusation with a silence of the deepest amazement (to say nothing more severe); that I have

reason to declare it an absolute absurdity ; that I have reason to be of opinion that it treats less of a question of right and justice than of the soundness of the human understanding.

“I have nothing more to say. It may perhaps be expected that I should plead, as reasons for my acquittal, my personal character, my truth, the unblemished course of my short political career. The transaction of to-day has nearly tempted me to recall the events which took place, commencing five years ago, when monarchy, in whose name I am now prosecuted, had an opportunity to learn who were its faithful supporters. But my conduct at that time is within the view and the knowledge of all the world, and I disdain to waste a single word upon it. I determined, in pleading for my work, to plead the cause of German philosophy, but I could not determine to plead against a charge directed personally against myself.”

On the 2nd March sentence was pronounced against Professor Gervinus, condemning him to an imprisonment of four months, and ordering his work to be publicly destroyed.

THE TRANSLATOR.

P R E F A C E.

THIS Introduction to the History of the Nineteenth Century is nothing beyond what its title expresses—a portion and the commencement of a great work. I have been induced by various reasons to bring it forward in a separate form, prior to the publication of the whole. In the first place, its length would have rather encumbered the early part of the History; and in the second place, it might by its contents, which treat of some historical preliminaries, alarm a large circle of readers, who would be satisfied with the narrative itself. These reasons would perhaps have scarcely been sufficient to justify a separate publication, still less to anticipate the principal work, which may not for some time appear. But my friends, who have read this Introduction, have thought that its contents might serve to reassure those whose confidence in our future has been shaken, to raise once more the sinking faith of those who begin to doubt the present, and to prepare a refuge of hope for the number who have suffered in the shipwreck of these last years. My diffidence is silenced by the judgment of men whom I esteem. Could my pamphlet in the smallest degree accomplish the end which they predict, I should lament every day that delayed its publication. The habit of contemplating the History of the World has early checked in me those sanguine expectations which move other men, and spared me many a delusive hope; but it has never refused me the consolation which I believe my readers may find in this communication. It is true that it teaches us to lay aside impatient hopes for rapid political results, but at the same time it teaches us to smile in pity at the vain triumph and momentary success of the dominant factions, and to surrender the belief that the affairs of this world are guided by the caprice, or shaped by the arbitrary

will of the few. By this retrospect we acquire a habit of recognising in the smallest span of the history nearest to our own times the gigantic movements of ages, and to discover its most prominent features, engraved by the hand of Providence, not by examining it in its details, but by viewing it as a whole.

With the exception of some great points of view and epochs by which the spirit of modern history may be judged, nothing new will be found, or may be expected, in these pages. If laws may be deduced from history, they can only proceed from that which is generally known, accepted, and indisputable; and only such facts will be presented here, in the remarkable epoch in which they occurred. The little extraneous matter which is annexed to it, is of unconstrained growth, deduced from the historical events themselves, and is free from all the technicality of system, and from all the artifice of sophistry. The plant of reality, which appears here in the simple type of a law of nature, will, I trust, be found healthy and sound; and in the full blossom of those buds of promise which here and there appear, we also hope there may be discovered no trace of premature development.

GERVINUS.

Heidelberg, in the Autumn of 1852.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

HISTORY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

SECTION I.

PURPORT AND DESIGN OF THE TREATISE.

THE present work forms the introduction to a detailed narrative, comprising the period from the fall of the French Empire, and the renewal of the relations of the European powers at the Congress of Vienna, to the middle of the present century. The aim of the subsequent history will be to discover the import and the intrinsic meaning of the events of this period.

This short space of time (not longer in duration than a single human life) contains events which, in its commencement, were everywhere connected with the past, and which to this hour continue uninterrupted in their onward course; though taken together, they appear but as a fragment, whose importance in the History of the World can only be recognized in its connexion with that which has preceded it.

In order correctly to assign to this historical episode its true position, we must take a retrospective glance at the occurrences of the last centuries in Europe; in them, or even in their connexion with still older times, we may recognize the progress of, and the historical epochs in, the development of states, the beginning of modern history, and with it that of the short period which will form the subject of our detailed narrative. If this introductory examination should convince us that, in spite of all impediments and turnings, history, in three or four consecutive centuries, invariably follows one

direction, we shall then readily come to the conclusion, that the thirty or forty years we have ourselves witnessed have followed the same. It will not then appear unreasonable, if we should trace its end in the invariableness of its direction, and, in (what we have called) the aim of our narrative, discover the import of our times and the spirit of our history, in a connected view of the present with the past.

All events of history, viewed in short periods of time, move in one course, resembling other equally short periods in their general character; and are the result of certain prevailing influences. Longer periods, taken together, present the appearance of constant oscillations between opposite impulses. They resist the predominance of any one idea, of any one leading power or action; but, in the survey of the great course of centuries, we cannot fail to perceive the alternate ebb and flow of a stream in a certain direction, and the progress of a guiding principle. In our detailed narration of the history of modern times, we shall endeavour (as is the task of every historian) to comprehend these three movements in one view; and confine ourselves in this introductory treatise to the consideration of the progress of those prevailing ideas which have determined the character of the times.

SECTION II.

The law of Historical Development. — The course of the Development of States in Greece. — The same course of Development in Modern States. — Greek Tyranny. — Absolutism in modern times. — Political Development in Modern History.

THE states of Europe since the commencement of the Christian era form as connected and general a history as that of the group of states of the Greek peninsula and its colonies in antiquity. The same order and the same law is revealed in the course of their internal development in both periods; and in the history of the whole human race this law may be again observed in its largest manifestations. From Oriental despotism to aristocracy, from the government of the ancients and of the middle ages, founded on slavery and serfdom, to the state policy of modern times, which is yet in the course of development, a regular progress may be perceived from the intellectual and civil freedom of one alone, to that of the few and of the many. But where states have completed their term of existence, we may again observe a descent in civilization, freedom, and power, from the highest point in this ascending scale of development, from the many to the few, and from the few again to one alone. This law may be traced throughout history in every separate state, as well as in the above-mentioned group of states.

Aristotle, with remarkable sagacity, has already explained this law in its bearings upon the history of the Greek nation. In the oldest times, as Homer describes them, when the population was yet scanty, civilization and wealth, even the training to the use of arms, and their possession, were confined to the few; patriarchal kings reigned in Greece, who were the sole proprietors of chariots, the leaders of the troops, and presided over sacrifices or in cases of jurisdiction. When, after a time, the number of educated, wealthy men, capable of bearing arms, increased, and superiority in war was decided by the ablest horseman, the equestrian order, the aristocracy,

became the governing body of the state, and the kingly power was either limited, as in Sparta, or set aside, as in every other country. As the increasing prosperity of the middle class of the people kept pace with the degeneracy of the aristocracy, caused by their egotism and selfish ambition, and as by improvements in the science of war the foot-soldier acquired consideration, and the navy called for the services of the lower orders, the rule of the people, the democratic form of government, began to take the place of the aristocratic; or rather, as states gained in power and extent, and their policy and mode of warfare became more systematic and scientific, mixed constitutions arose, in which the noble, the middle class, and the lower orders of the people took their stand beside one another, each possessed of their peculiar privileges.

The development of the states of Europe in modern times has followed the same course, although in wider relations of numbers, space, and time. In the commencement, during the first outpouring and settlement of the Teutonic races in Europe, patriarchal kings ruled here (as in antiquity), as chiefs in war and justice. In these heathen times, as in those of Greece, they founded their prerogative upon their derivation from the gods. But, even in the Christian era, there was an epoch when a prince (surnamed the Great) assumed to himself superiority in intellect and power, and, as such, was recognized by all as their chief. With the introduction of a more extended education, larger possessions, and with the increased importance of the horse in the art of war, the equestrian order and feudal nobility acquired the chief rule. The kingly power was limited, or only set aside in an exceptional case, because the vast extent of modern states made the point of union in a monarchy necessary, and because the records of the Old Testament, and the recollections of the Roman empire, consecrated and gave security to the regal dignity. From the time when transferable property began to be of value, when cities were enriched by trade and commerce, and the Swiss infantry acquired the pre-eminence in war, the rule of the feudal nobility from the fifteenth century was shaken; and a violent struggle commenced, which has not been fully adjusted to this day, and in which the middle class strives to unite education, property, and influence in itself, while the lower orders of

the people press hard upon its heels. Where this battle has been decided, the purely democratic form of government (which was natural to the municipalities of antiquity) has seldom been the result; but, rather, mixed constitutions (which Aristotle had already designated by that name), suggested by the wider circumference of modern states.

By these internal changes, the transition from the single domination of the king to the oligarchical sway of the aristocracy was simple and easy; but the transition from thence to the sway of the people was complicated and difficult. In the former case, it only required the few to be unanimous, and one individual could offer no resistance; but the unanimity of the people was in itself much more difficult to effect, because education and interests were not so equally distributed among the many, and their divided possessions cannot be employed with as much power as the wealth which is concentrated in a few families. The resistance was therefore also greater on the other side. The aristocracy, possessed of arms, castles, and vast lands, the executive power and jurisprudence, with their vassals, overgrown offshoots from the people, were closely allied among themselves, and, by their common interest, with foreign nobles. The internal deterioration of the aristocracy, their habits of plunder, their neglect, even destruction of the public welfare for their own advantage, became necessary in the Grecian states to lead the way to the government of the people. But, in spite of this internal decay of the aristocracy, a powerful and skilful leader was still required, as Aristotle has observed, to help the people to complete their overthrow; although his own object might solely be to seize on the government for himself and his family. This was the occasion of the government of the Tyrants, who for two centuries (B.C. 700—500) extended their sway over the states of Greece, and paved the way to democracy. For, although the tyranny of Greece long impeded the government of the people, yet it first laid its foundations by its conquest over their most dangerous enemy, the nobles.

The whole history of the transition from aristocracy to democracy has its exact parallel in the history of modern Europe; with this difference only, that all here moves on a larger scale, which immensely increases and enhances the

difficulties and impediments in the development of modern states. Here also the feudal nobility have in each separate nation been the first to work their own ruin—in Spain, before and during the government of the house of Trastámara; in Germany, from the time of the dissensions caused by the right of private warfare; in England, during the wars of the Roses; in France, by the burdensome wars and wasteful strife of parties under Charles VII. But if, in such times, the anarchy which reigned among the nobles broke their political power, that of the monarch, which continued to exist, increased, because it was needed by the lower classes, who were rising to influence. Other circumstances, peculiar to modern times, threw greater difficulties than in antiquity in the way of popular government. The aristocracy of Christendom was divided into two separate camps. In the new form of religion (Christianity) mental cultivation and the progress made in the science of arms led separate ways. The struggles of the people were not only repressed, because they had to dispute the possession of power with these two branches of the aristocracy, they had not only to try the force of arms against the arms of the secular noble, but also to test their intellectual cultivation against the cultivation of the spiritual noble. They had to fight a two-fold revolution against ecclesiastical and secular power. Besides, the union and strength of the people in vast yet thinly-populated districts was of a slower growth than in antiquity; and before the lower classes were admitted, under the protection of the monarchy, to contend with the aristocracy, we meet with many isolated cases of insurrection among the citizens and peasantry, between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, which inevitably led to their own destruction. But, at the close of the fifteenth century, a co-operation began of the people with their princes, whose unlimited power made them the Tyrants of modern times. Modern absolutism and the tyranny of antiquity are one and the same phenomenon, and resemble each other in every feature. Most of these sovereigns, such as Henry VII., Ferdinand the Catholic, Maximilian of Austria, from whom this monarchy sprang, so destructive to the noble, had, like the Tyrants of antiquity, been lately raised to the throne, or belonged to houses which had become powerful either by rich inheritance, or by matrimonial alliances. The standing armies by which they sur-

rounded themselves resembled the bodyguards of the petty municipal kings of Greece. Their political connexions with one another may be compared to the family ties which the Tyrants formed among themselves and with foreign despots. The love of splendour, the patronage of art and science, the employment of the people, while dazzling them with magnificent undertakings, were, in both cases, the same political expedients by which they sustained their own power; but they were also the co-operative causes which undermined their usurped authority. The fact that modern absolutism, like the tyranny of antiquity, only forms the transition from aristocracy to democracy, is sufficient to decide the resemblance of the two phenomena. Its destiny was fulfilled; it had broken the power of the common enemy, the noble, awakened the consciousness of unity in the people in this cause, and given a national direction to their policy. Education became equally accessible to all classes, and room was afforded for the industry of the lower orders, to the detriment of aristocratic violence and privilege; patriotism was roused, with the desire for freedom and equality of rights; and if democracy was not established in all its forms, it was, at least, in all its essentials. Absolutism had fulfilled its vocation, not only where it had resigned its single rule in favour of the people and their representatives, but still fulfils it when, while in possession of power, it must and designedly does work against that vocation.

The point of view from which we now examine the so-called modern times (from the fall of the Byzantine empire to our days) is the transition from the government of the few to that of the many, under the alternate encouragements and hindrances of absolutism. This single phenomenon occupies the whole of this era and of this whole continent. Developments of the same nature occupied two centuries in the little country of Greece; they still continue through a fourth century, on the far wider field of Europe. The whole period from the end of the middle ages to our own time is filled with one constant struggle of democratic ideas, which have been scattered among all races by the Reformation, and which contend against the aristocratic institutions of the middle ages. Absolutism is thrust between the contending elements, and alternately inclines towards the old feudal

order, or the new order of a middle class ; now, supported by the middle class, and providing for their necessities, it helps to humble the aristocracy ; and now, under the protection of the nobles, it resists the power of those below them. Yet, in the time of the French revolution, close upon the period which is to be the subject of our historical narrative, all these antagonistic powers wrestled, as in the first heat of action, in an apparently last struggle. The history of all eras, even that of the present, offers nothing but a renewal of the struggle, which is yet undecided, upon an ever-widening field of action, and the battle will again pass to a coming generation for further decision.

A nearer inspection of the great leading facts of the last century will everywhere lead us back to this point of sight, while it presents to us on all sides the relation of the Past with the Present.

SECTION III.

Contrast of the Romanic and Teutonic races in the Middle Ages. — Counteracting influences. — The Feudal System. — Conquest of Byzantium — The beginning of a new Era. — The Absolutism of Princes. — Effect of the Absolutism of Princes on the foundation of the Spanish Monarchy. — The States of the Church. — Papal Tyranny. — The Papacy. — Its universal Dominion. — Universal Empire of Charles V. — Re-action of the Reformation against Papacy and the Empire. — Renewed Opposition of the Romanic and Teutonic races. — Discovery of America. — The Reformation. — Teutonic-Protestant spirit of Individuality. — Anticipation of the Democratic results of German-Protestantism in State and Church in the time of Luther. — Conservative spirit of Luther. — Historical course of the vicissitudes in Church and State among Protestant nations. — Monarchical character of the Church Reforms by Luther and Cranmer in Germany and England. — Monarchical character of the Political Reforms in Germany in the time of Luther. — Aristocratic character of the Political state of Switzerland and the Netherlands in the time of Calvin. — Aristocratic character of the Calvinistic Church Reformation. — Democratic Element of Calvinism. — General reaction of Catholicism. — Re-action victorious over the Protestants in France. — Re-action against Protestantism in England. — Democratic phase of the State and Church in England. — The restoration of the Monarchy in England. — The English Constitution. — The North-American Colonies. — The American Constitution.

DURING the Middle Ages the nations of Europe fluctuated between two opposite phenomena, either of which made the existence of states, or a natural division of states into nations, their regulation, guidance, and development, difficult, indeed impossible. A universal struggle to enlarge the limits of their extensive national boundaries and to institute a common government might be in many ways observed in the higher classes of society ; to which an impediment was presented in the peculiar tendency from those below them to subdivide into small fiefs and municipalities within each separate state. The Teutonic races had spread the spirit of partition, the aversion to all centralization, throughout Europe ; and this universal bias leads us back to the relations of ancient and modern Rome.

In the beginning of the Middle Ages the Roman empire presented to the new races the sole and brilliant example of the development of a state. The idea of its restoration was the ambition of even the first conquerors of Italy. Charlemagne realized it in his prodigious empire, which almost advanced to the borders of Christendom. And from that period the idea was bequeathed to succeeding centuries, as a political problem, and to our times, as a political fiction. To this idea of a Roman empire, of a universal secular kingdom, Christian Rome added that of a spiritual empire ; since the promulgation of Islamism, the necessity of Christian unity had made Rome the spiritual centre of Christendom. If it had been possible for the Empire and the Papacy to have united peaceably, if that which had already occurred in the Byzantine kingdom of the East could have also occurred in the Teutonic Roman kingdom of the West, and could the combined secular and spiritual power have rested on one head, the doubly powerful ruler of Christendom would (thus endowed) have been able to call together a far more united force, in a far more forcible union, than that which was actually assembled when the crusaders met to fight the battle of the world. The idea of Christian unity would have then gained the preponderance over that of national developments, and in the centre of this quarter of the world, in Germany or Italy, a monarchical power and single form of government would have been constructed, which would have thrown the utmost difficulties in the way of the national and human development of the whole of Europe.

This was however frustrated by the jealousy of the two powers who were rivals for the supremacy over all Christian crowns and kingdoms, as well as by the national hatred which separated the German from the Italian. But what rendered it impossible from the beginning was that peculiarity of the Teutonic character, which, in strange opposition to these projects of dissolving all states into one, endeavoured even to subdivide the states which were already in existence. The Teutonic races at all times presented insuperable difficulties to the Romanic idea of unity in state, law, and religion, either by the partitions among them occasioned by inheritance and the right of election, by the feudal system and vassalage, by their propensity to found their liberties on

federal union, or in a later age by the schism of Protestantism. This last, the religious struggle, belongs to modern history, while the secular struggle is the spirit of the history of the last century of the Middle Ages. From the time of the crusades, when the great Confederation of Christendom was dissolved, the features of general history disappear, the language of Rome yields before the various popular languages, the separate national development of individual states commences, and the spiritual and secular aristocracy form the leading thread through the entangled events of the Middle Ages. In the fourteenth century Princes appear opposed to the Emperor, Councils opposed to the Pope, while danger from their aristocracy, which everywhere obtained the ascendancy, already threatened both powers. But the nobles, instead of endeavouring as a body to secure their political influence, instead of aiming at the foundation of order in the state within the national frontiers (rendered difficult by circumstances, the result of earlier times), did their utmost rather, by an abuse of power, to destroy the very existence of the state. This abuse and its consequences may be attributed to the separation of the aristocratic body into secular and spiritual, the warlike rudeness of the one and the immature policy of both. The spiritual aristocracy, by their dependence on a foreign head, prevented the consolidation of the state, while the secular held itself independent of the native head, and thus threw an impediment in the way of its unity. Every petty and great vassal, or man in power, had only his own interest in view, scarcely even that of those under him. Where all were rulers, there could be no government ; where there was nothing but division, there could be no unity ; where there were only states within states, no general state was possible ; the parasitical growth on the people drew the strength from the tree itself. As Macchiavelli related of the feudal lords in Naples, who dwelt careless and idle on their lands, for which they paid no taxes, every energy, even their own ancestral warlike energy, departed, and inaccessible to every idea of unanimity in the state ; so Hutten has described the rule of the petty castellated lords of Germany, who were only accustomed to a life spent in the chase, in pillage, and strife, who disturbed the trade of the citizen, and made all security of condition, order, and development impossible. In Spain, Isabella the Great of Cas-

tile soon discovered that, while in the possession of boundless property in land and revenue, and all high places and dignities, they could raise great armies, write in the style of regal majesty, and baffle every superior power and all monarchical guidance. In every country the feudal nobility made a political national union of all classes, and patriotic development of the whole strength of the people, impossible. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries they distracted the state with fearful private wars, and finally destroyed themselves and their own power.

With the first shock given to the existence of the feudal system in the middle ages begins a new era. In the course of the fifteenth century it had been already undermined by discoveries whose consequences were of the utmost importance, and which, by a providential decree, reached the world from without at the hour of its internal decline; one event alone decided its regeneration, and may be considered as the point of separation between the middle ages and modern times, viz. the invention of fire-arms, and the alteration in the art of war, which deprived the feudal service of knighthood of its last claim to merit. Printing and the propagation of knowledge robbed the nobles and the clergy of the peculiar privilege of intellectual culture; the compass and other improvements in the art of navigation became a means in the hands of the middle class to raise their political importance by wealth and influence to a level with that of the noble. The effect of these alterations in the aspect of society upon the decline of the power of the aristocracy was, though slow, decisive—though gradual, universal. The first sudden shock it received was the result of an important event, the conquest of Constantinople (1453), and with it the annihilation of the Byzantine empire. This alarming catastrophe seemed suddenly to open the eyes of all Europe to the weakness of her political alliances, and indeed to awaken her to her deficiency in the actual existence of states.—The decrepit Empire, as it fell, was (in consequence of its separation from the Church) without political alliance or aid from abroad, and was at home split into small dominions, which alone might have accounted for its conquest by the Turks. The conquerors (in the bitterest hostility to European states and nations) consisted of one single people, subjected to one will. They possessed an infantry and army with which

no western state could compete. The experience, how the disadvantages of internal division, common to all Christian states, and how the advantages possessed by the arch enemy of Christianity, together contributed to promote his power and splendour, effected, as by enchantment, a sudden and well-founded alteration throughout all the greater states of Europe. Alliances were formed between princes and states, and a recognized system of policy began first to assume a form. Stratagem and force were adopted to put an end to the dissensions and arbitrary acts of the feudal lords. The absolute rule of the monarch, the mighty vanquisher of the power of the nobles, sprang up, as if out of nothing, at one time and in all places. It gave union and consistency to the state, and tended to establish its influence at home, while it endeavoured by a new system of war, and the creation of an army, to extend its power abroad. At the same moment rulers appeared in England, France, Portugal, Castile, and Arragon, who, possessed with new views and energies, took advantage of the changes in the circumstances of the time, to lift the royal power from its subjection to the nobles, and to guard the unity of the state from partition. The one common means to attain their end, adopted by the princes of that day with evident design, and as if agreed upon among themselves, was, the absolute sway of the Church. They vied with one another in paying honour to merit, more than to rank or birth; they promoted the education of the clergy; they invited all possessed of talents, in whatever situation they might be found, within the circle of their courts, elevated justice and its tribunals, and bestowed the highest places, which had hitherto been reserved for the warlike noble, on lawyers and ecclesiastics. The princes who played their part with most skill were Henry VII. of England, Louis XI. of France, and Ferdinand the Catholic.

Of these "three magi," as Bacon has called them, Ferdinand was the master spirit; to Macchiavelli he appeared the living type of a "prince of the new school," such as his austere judgment led him to declare to be the necessary remedy for the times. The power of the nobles had never attained to such a height of iniquity and violence as by legal means in Arragon, and by favoritism in Castile; and nowhere did they fall as rapidly as under the skilful strokes of Ferdi-

nand and Isabella—rulers of equal wisdom, and who by their own great qualities supplied the deficiencies in their government. The upright Isabella openly avowed her intention no longer to be the plaything of her nobles. By their internal policy and judicial measures they restored peace to the country, and security from the violence of the aristocracy; they established the rights and prosperity of the different communities of the state; and by not permitting the nobles to absent themselves for any length of time from the Cortes, as well as by accustoming them to obey the royal commands, they gradually withdrew from them their political influence. Relying on their undoubted adherence to the Catholic faith, they could venture to meet with authority the secular encroachments of the ecclesiastics, and even of the Pope himself; they dared to appropriate to the crown three grand master-ships of three orders of knighthood, which were possessed of almost regal power; they were enabled to raise a force for the Holy War, which, without making a standing army necessary, placed, in case of need, the whole male population of the country at their disposal. This population was trained in two excellent military schools. The military tactics of the earliest Spanish school reached its highest perfection in the long wars with Grenada, and the value of heavy infantry was tested in their German and Swiss foot auxiliaries. The two systems were united by the “great captain” (Gonsalvo of Cordova) in the Neapolitan war against the French, when he introduced improvements in artillery and fortification, and trained the troops with which in after years Charles V. thought to rule the world. By the excellent use made by the Catholic kings of this powerful army abroad, and of their newly acquired authority at home, Isabella increased the revenue of Castile thirty-fold, without any burdensome exactions, and Ferdinand (to use the words of Macchiavelli) raised himself from one of the weakest, to the rank of the most celebrated and distinguished prince in Europe. After such success, which in spite of the peculiar bias of the Spanish people towards separation and dismemberment, united a divided country, and in the short period of a single reign out of four kingdoms (exclusive of that of Naples) formed one, even a republican statesman like Macchiavelli could not be blind to the extraordinary advantages to the people and to

the state which grew out of the absolutism of the prince. He looked beyond the means, to the object attained by them; beyond the one evil to the general welfare; and he divined the spirit of modern history, when, prophesying over its cradle, he clothed the historical experience of past ages in the words of an austere theory—that to found a new order of the state on the ruins of the deceased forms of government of the middle ages, the unlimited authority of one individual became a necessity, and even a benefit, supposing its existence to be only temporary; it would then be a preparation for the government of law, and a school for freedom. He could not, indeed, foretell, when he bestowed particular praise on the new rule of Ferdinand, that, first in Spain itself, and in a short time everywhere, a greater evil would grow out of the long continuance and overwhelming despotic power of monarchy, than had ever arisen from the rule of the nobles.

Among those states which could date the recovery of their lost power, or their re-formation, from the period of the general shock received from the East, were the states of the Church. Out of the time of her deepest depression, during the residence at Avignon, and during the great schism, the papacy rose rapidly to consideration, beginning with the reign of Nicholas V., at the very period of the fall of Byzantium. Experience had taught Rome as a fundamental maxim, that the spiritual authority of the Pope, which had suffered so many attacks in the fourteenth century, must be supported by his secular dominion. Alexander VI. and Julius II. therefore indulged their passion for acquisition in Italy, in exactly the same manner as the Aragonese monarch in his dominions. They made the small lordships, the neighbouring towns, and contiguous states subject to Rome; and thus the dominions of Julius II. comprehended almost the whole of that part of Italy which has since composed the states of the Church, while at that very time Ferdinand took possession of all that has since belonged to Spain. Hand in hand with this confirmation of the power of the state came the austerity of princely rule in Spain, the suppression of all municipal liberties, and the despotism of the great families of the nobles. Nowhere does the resemblance of this new form of absolutism with that of the tyranny of antiquity strike the mind so forcibly as upon the ancient soil of Rome, in those remarkable times,

when the popes and their family connexions rivalled the reckless tyrants of old in cruelty, ambition, and the open depravity of their lives; when they gathered around them the splendour of ancient literature and art; and when pagan unbelief penetrated even to the priesthood. The policy of the papal See and the Church became more worldly, all high places might be had for money, Christendom was taxed for the splendid monuments of Rome, and, as a natural consequence of this degeneration and oppression, the re-action of the Church Reformation appeared, which, under the excrescence of Romish tyranny, scattered the seeds of all the freedom of later ages among the people.

This re-action was not confined to one place, or a political movement within the states of the Church, but universal, and a religious movement from without; in the same way as the altered aspect of Rome since the conquest of Constantinople had had a general effect throughout Christendom. If, in the first instance, the fall of Byzantium had produced greater stability in the larger states of Europe, it had, on the other hand, a contrary effect, by reviving the early Roman plan of universal empire belonging to the middle ages of the Church. Thus every danger which threatened Christianity in general favoured the interests of the Roman hierarchy. As the foundation of the papacy was laid during the first promulgation of Islamism, and attained its greatest ecclesiastical and secular power during the crusades, in like manner its dominions and general consideration abroad revived after the successes of the Turk in Europe. Rome had indeed been obliged in the course of time to make various concessions to particular states, which had resisted her early aggressions, but, in compensation for these, she had acquired new territory from others. Peace was again restored in the German Empire, and the Pope had dictated the conditions. Pius II. had contrived to represent that it was the interest of the Emperor to unite with him to resist the German princes, and their desires for reform in church and state, and to make the league between the Empire and the Papacy the guiding star of imperial policy; from this time the papal influence became intolerable.

The Emperor shared his authority in the diet with the Roman legate; Maximilian himself reckoned the papal revenue derived from Germany to be a hundred times greater

than his own ; no branch of the imperial jurisdiction was secure from the usurpations of the Church ; the oppression and impositions of papal tribunals had become unbearable, and the extension of church lands which were inalienable had risen to a monstrous height. If this connexion with the German empire gave additional power to the papacy, the alliance it had also formed with the rapidly increasing kingdom of Spain was of still greater importance. Here the spirit of the crusades revived in the wars of Granada, which by the fall of a Mahometan kingdom retaliated for the fall of Byzantium, and roused to its highest pitch the adventurous spirit of the Spanish people, their zeal for the Catholic faith, and the religious pride of the nobles of pure Christian blood. The Catholic kings were likewise blindly devoted to the Church, and were alternately the servants and leaders of the most terrible of religious fanaticisms. The hierarchy in every way fostered this new spirit, and a knot was tied between Rome and Spain, which seemed as firm as the future relations between Rome and Germany were full of dissension and rivalry. The jealousy of Rome appeared silenced before such august princes. They had left the Pope at liberty to act according to his pleasure in the ecclesiastical affairs of their kingdom ; the Pope likewise left them at liberty to act according to theirs, when Castile conquered the kingdom of Granada and the North African coast, and with shameless treachery took possession of heretical Navarre ; and when Aragon (with Sicily), acting in the first place as the ally of France, resolved on a Polish partition of the papal fief of Naples, and then betrayed France in her share of the booty. Spain was already the most powerful monarchy in Europe ; she presented a great barrier to the immense force of the Moslem in the Mediterranean ; and Italy, feeling she needed a strong protector against that same power, looked less unfavourably on the foreign domination of the Spaniards, whose faith was as fervent as her own, than she had ever regarded the domination of the Germans and French. The maintenance of the power of Spain was of far more importance to the protection of Christendom, to the safety of Italy and of the states of the Church, than if the Popes had at that time succeeded in assembling the people for crusades into the East as in the eleventh century. The discoveries of Columbus now opened a new

and boundless prospect before Rome and Spain, and strengthened the union between the two. They were a marvellous indemnification for the loss of the East, a new ground for the promulgation of the hierarchical power of Rome, as well as of territorial power for the Spanish princes. Out of the plenitude of his apostolic authority, the Pope bestowed these new dominions of the West upon them, and granted them (with a precipitation repented of when too late) the permission to levy tithes and to confer ecclesiastical benefices. The enterprise of Columbus (undertaken immediately after the war of Granada) partook of a similar spirit of adventure, and zealous rage for proselytism; it incited the covetous passions, fanaticism, and whatever was most exaggerated in the Spanish character, to such a height, that it became capable of yielding to the illusions of the most boundless ambition, and to those of the most extraordinary credulity; and induced them, in defiance of their ancient liberties, to submit to the barbarous institutions of ecclesiastical bigotry. The revival of the dark spirit of the Visigoths in this mighty state and arrogant House, which was soon to reign over Austria, Burgundy, and Spain, restored the importance of the old and traditional authority of the hierarchy. This spiritual authority first laid the foundation of the secular power of the popes, which in return gave strength to the former. By an equal sway over the three great social institutions, domestic life, the church, and the state, it established the most fearful and comprehensive despotism the world ever witnessed. In domestic life it fettered the mind and conscience of man to its arbitrary will; it received him at his birth, prepared him at school to fulfil all its desires, and quitted him at his entrance into the active world, to return with renewed vigilance at his marriage, in the confessional, and at the hour of his death. In the church, it required him to resign liberty of thought and investigation, in order that unity of faith might reign throughout mankind; it degraded the state in the estimation of men, by stifling every national feeling to substitute that of Christian unity; and by denying the spiritual investiture to the secular authority, it arrogated supreme power to itself over the secular ruler; it divested the state of all higher purposes, and laid claims to honours and dignities for the Church alone. This monstrous power was exercised by a priesthood, outwardly

separated from every other class of men, and internally preserved from the danger of change, progress, and reformation, by the institution of consecration, which formed it into a self-creating aristocracy. The priesthood formed a body set apart by particular privileges, and the use of a separate language in their official duties, by their education, celibacy, and by the peculiar nature of their common interests. They were divided from all the ties of family, community, state, and country; a body who, in opposition to the principle of the remaining institutions of the state, and during a period when the inequality of class was universal, maintained the principle of the equality of man, by the systematic practice of doing honour to merit rather than to birth, and of leaving the highest places open to the peasant as much as to him who was born a prince. Let any one then represent to himself this universal Catholic priesthood in unconditional dependence on the vicegerent of Christ, endowed with the arbitrary power and infallibility of God, and he will clearly see how nearly this power succeeded, even at so late a period, in leading all political and spiritual life into the narrow channel of a hierarchical policy. As this revived ecclesiastical power advanced with the despotic power of princes, and in the closest intelligence with the greatest among the royal families of a later age,—a family who reigned as lords and masters in the Roman empire of the German nation,—the reader will perceive that never before the commencement of the sixteenth century had this question arrived at so critical a point : whether Europe was to sink under the oppressive rule of the hierarchy or under that of royal absolutism, or under their combined and united weight, or whether a national and free development should be permitted to advance towards its maturity.

But great as was the danger which threatened from Rome, it was exceeded by a still greater. The very same events in the East which gave a fresh impulse to the Papal authority, and urged Spain on in the path of her greatness, necessarily, and in a like manner, produced a firmer consolidation externally and internally of the continental states bordering on Turkey. While the Spanish monarch constructed a state in Western Europe out of solid homogeneous national elements, the house of Austria, which was actually as well as by inheritance in possession of the empire, laid the foundation (by

family connexions) for the union of these vast territories. In Eastern Europe, where union had become a matter of urgent necessity, it was already agreed that Bohemia and Hungary should be sunk in Austria. In the West, Maximilian had acquired the Netherlands by marriage, and his son also had obtained the heiress of the great Spanish kingdom: It was probable that the German empire, in the hands of Austria, with such an accession of territory, and under such auspices, would, on its part, resume the scheme of universal rule, which it could now maintain over a far more extensive dominion than in the middle ages, as well as support by the newly-acquired monarchical power which had been lately perfected. The Empire had been weakened in the middle ages by the predominance of the aristocracy; but now the aristocracy seemed to be everywhere on the decline. The Roman idea, that princely power was derived from Rome, was acknowledged on all thrones, as well as in the Empire. From Maximilian the German states for the first time listened to a language they were little accustomed to hear from their prince, when, as emperor, he took occasion to remember his obligations towards Austria, in order to evade his oaths to the Diet. The states were obliged to rouse themselves to the consideration of the effects of this increase to the dominions of Austria; this adding territory upon territory to the monarchy, which had been forced upon and into the independent German confederation. Maximilian, who had yet only in prospect the union with Bohemia and Hungary and the Spanish inheritance, and who was always involved in the difficulties of war and finance, could not himself be considered dangerous. But the case was different when, in 1519, the imperial power fell into the hands of Charles V., who had just entered upon the Spanish-Burgundian inheritance. The world had never before seen so tremendous a power in one hand, and in the hand of so ambitious a prince. Rome, in her forbearance towards Spain, allowed the imperial crown to pass to Charles without remonstrance, though, by former agreements, the possession of Naples should not have been attached to it. Lord over the united powers of Spain, Burgundy, and Naples, Charles now followed up the Burgundian policy of Charles the Bold,—systematically to weaken France. He drove her from Italy, and seized on Milan in addition to

Naples, and this in conjunction with the Pope, who needed the good will of the Emperor to assist him to repress the rising doctrines of Luther. The inherent jealousy of the Pope towards the Emperor, only revived when Charles converted Italy into a Spanish province, by detaching Milan from the connexion with Germany, in the same way as he had already included Utrecht in his hereditary possessions, and withdrawn the Netherlands from the jurisdiction of the Empire. But it was already too late for Rome to put a check on the dominion and power of this man, who was borne on by favourable circumstances and the most inexhaustible resources. At the head of the best troops, he was sustained by the warlike ardour of a nation which, partly by its love of renown, partly by its blind obedience, was almost as available as the Moslems for any enterprise; and Charles V., notwithstanding the dangers with which he threatened the liberties of the people, commanded Spain's old and new treasures, as well as the capabilities and wealth of the Netherlands, which was flattered by seeing the world governed out of Brabant. For well might this be called the empire of the world, when Charles reigned over almost the whole of the West of Europe, and guided, at his will, the policy and resources of his brother in Eastern Europe, who ruled over the wide lands of Bohemia, Hungary, and Austria. In the far west his soldiers conquered boundless continents, and it seemed as if he intended to revive the spirit of the crusades against the Moslem, as the head of Christendom, which dignity gave him the central position in Europe, from whence a universal dominion could most securely be established. The only power in the Roman empire which offered him any resistance was that of the great German states, who, far from partaking of the general decline of the feudal nobility, aimed at rising to the independence of petty sovereigns. But they even appeared to be crushed when Charles had succeeded in conquering the Protestant princes, weakened by their want of union among themselves, and whose integrity could not preserve them from the consummate skill with which the Spaniard fomented the dissensions among his enemies, to their own destruction. From that time, the emperor retained his Spanish troops in the empire with imperial gold; gave the imperial seal into foreign hands; silenced every opponent in the Diet; and seized on the free-

dom of the German cities ; while his courtiers (who believed nothing impossible to him) loudly protested, during the interim, that this land should yield obedience to Spain. Nor was this the climax of the danger with which this man threatened the free developments of the world. When at last he found Julius III. (a creature willing to submit to his influence) seated in the Pontifical chair, and the councils of Trent guided by his will, he entertained the bold intention of effecting a reform in the Church, by his despotic power alone, on which two centuries had laboured in vain. He proposed to subject the hierarchy to the views of his worldly ambition, and to enlist its spiritual authority, and, with it, a devoted civil and military force, into his service. What could appear impossible to him, now that the empire was confirmed anew on the two strong foundations—the union of the old Roman ideas, the supremacy in Christendom, and the unlimited authority of the Cæsars? Had he continued to maintain this power to the end of his days, and could he have introduced the Spanish succession into Germany, or had he been able to succeed in his other project, by which, in consequence of the marriage of his son Philip with Mary of England, the united Spanish-Austrian-Burgundian house would have possessed the world, Roman bigotry and Spanish despotism would have crushed Europe ; and the same conditions which threw Spain and Italy back to the state of the middle ages, would, in spite of every revulsion, have been maintained to our days, and would have become universal.

But before Charles V. could complete, or even lay these plans for his own security, one stroke demolished, not *his* work alone, but even the proud structure of Roman dominion throughout Germany. Now, as well as in the middle ages, the jealousy of the two potentates greatly hastened on a crisis in their overgrown power, the origin of which was at this period, as formerly, the intrinsic incompatibility of the Teutonic and Romanic character. Intelligence and habits of life, refinement and rudeness, customs and feelings, liberty of conscience and fanaticism, nationality and anarchy, all the different qualities of men, the interests of every class, from the lower to the upper, the ecclesiastic and the statesman, the interests of the king, as those of the peasant, the whole genius of the German people, rose against the twofold oppression of

the south. The history of those days, when the courage and profound learning of Luther roused a spirit in Germany to oppose the domination of the Church, and not only attacked the lives led by the Popes, but also their authority and (what even gratified the pride of the Reformers still more) their doctrine, contained the record of the proudest deeds, couched in the humblest forms. Along with the Catholic doctrine he threw down the strongest pillars of its might—error and superstition; until Maurice of Saxony, in the pursuit of his worldly views, wounded the emperor with his own weapons, and in a few days annihilated the labours of centuries. History, during these movements, advanced a step beyond any she had made for a thousand years, but on a road which presented so distant a prospect, that it required several centuries before mankind could become entirely habituated to the change, and begin to acknowledge and rejoice over the possession which was won at that time by so hard a struggle.

The opposition presented in the natures of the Romanic and Teutonic peoples, which even during the whole period of the middle ages, and from the earliest amalgamation of the races, had shown itself in every remarkable historical event, now gave a firm foundation and abiding energy to the German reformation; it formed a basis to the history of the ensuing epoch, and it gave the chief impulse to the succession of events, which not only carried the world further and further beyond the boundaries of the middle ages, but also crushed the newdespotism of princes. This opposition of races now for the first time, and with the commencement of a new epoch, burst from its inmost depths, called forth by religious dissension.

If the fall of Byzantium marked the commencement of a new era, this great event immediately led the way to two still greater, which determined the character of another epoch in history. The barrier presented in the East made the search after another road for traffic necessary, and led to the discovery of the New World; the fall of Greece had driven men of letters to seek a refuge in the West, which had occasioned a reform in the schools by the revival of the study of classical literature, given a new impulse to intellectual life, and smoothed the way for the Reformation. Both these events and their results form the substance of the general

history of the next century, and determine the character of its altered form, and mark the distinction between the Romanic and Teutonic nations. The colonization of the New World was at first considered to be the exclusive right of Spain and Portugal, and, for at least a century, was most extensively carried on by them; while the Reformation continues to this day to be looked upon as the peculiar property of the purely Teutonic nations. This important division of the two races which governed Europe, on the subject of the two events which governed the era, was of itself sufficient cause to raise a variance between them, to call forth a display of their intrinsic differences, and to ripen their opposition into enmity. The fortunes of the Spanish kings in the Moorish wars, and the discovery of America, produced two effects; it gave their foreign policy a direct tendency towards external aggrandisement, and fettered them still closer to the Roman Church. The fanaticism of the Moorish wars riveted the influence and authority of the Roman hierarchy afresh on the Spanish people; and it fastened itself on the Italians by the new splendour of the papacy, by the decline of the republics, as well as by the government of Spain. All the Romanic princes who aimed at universal dominion were forced into a strict adherence to the Catholic faith; "They were attached to the Pontifical chair," says brother Thomas Campanella even in the seventeenth century, "by interest, as much as by conviction; for whoever in Spain, Italy, or France, should, as a Protestant, have proposed to pursue as bold a scheme of policy as theirs, would have met with invincible enemies in the chiefs of two of these countries, and in the people of all three." The home policy of the Spanish monarchs was directed to the same end. Their despotism would soon have learnt, by the resistance of Protestant Germany, to hold fast to the Catholic faith, if even the close connexion between the secular and spiritual autocrats, and between the political and the religious aim at universal dominion, had not effected a natural combination of the two.

The union between Rome and Spain under Charles V., and which only a short time after his death was loosened and almost severed, was re-established afterwards on the most intimate footing, and to the peril of the whole world, during the long reign of Philip II. With this twofold aim at terri-

torial aggrandizement and catholic unity of faith, the Romanic nations and their chiefs encountered their bitterest enemies in the Teutonic-Protestant nations. From the time of the papal struggle against the Reformation, Spain fought in succession during the whole of the sixteenth century with Germany, the Netherlands, and England, and in the seventeenth France joined the combatants. This opposition of races lasted in all its keenness as long as religious dissensions were the predominant interests of society in Europe. It yielded and gradually passed away as the hard line of demarcation between the Romanic and Teutonic races was obliterated by those two great facts which governed the events of the world—the Teutonic-Protestant colonization of America, and, later on, French literature, which offered a kind of indemnification for its want of freedom in matters of religion by introducing a new series of intellectual and political interests into the world. From that time the Romanic races began once more to dispute with the Teutonic for the sole possession of intellectual and political freedom. But before this occurred, and to the very hour in which it did occur, the high vocation had been assigned to the latter to rouse the hearts and intellects of men on the subject of religion and to lay the foundations of the first free institutions in church and state; for as it had been in the rise and progress of the Reformation, in the attitude of Luther towards the Pope, and of the German princes towards Charles V., so it continued to be in the times which followed. All efforts which aim at the formation of great states, at one common government, and which at the same time endeavour to subject the minds of men to one form of religion, which proceed upon the principle of universality and absolutism in state and church, and upon the maintenance of the conditions of the middle ages, belong specially to the Romanic nations. The Teutonic races, on the contrary, sustain the principles of national independence and religious and political freedom, and aim at that intellectual culture and commercial activity which has given the peculiar character and greatness to modern times.

It is apparent that, in this opposition of interests, the same difference in the character of the two races was at work which in the middle ages had presented a counterpoise in the Teutonic to the Roman thirst for universal dominion, by the

separation of the former into corporate bodies, and by the partitions caused by the feudal system. If, during the middle ages, the spirit of confederation maintained the principle of an aristocratic freedom, so, in a later age, the same characteristic transformed itself into a spirit of individuality, which sowed the seeds of democracy. This characteristic feature of self-respect incited the nature of the Teutonic races to the education of the mass of the people, and to the independence which resulted from it. It promoted their freedom of action in belief and in knowledge, in political rights, and in the management of property and commercial industry. All democratic institutions, and all possibility of their duration, must depend on education, freedom of action, and on individual exertion. The Teutonic races have manifested this great truth, in contrast to the Romanic races of that period, and to the existing Slavonic world. This feeling of individuality prepared the re-actionary movement of the Reformation opposed to conformity to one universal religion, while the Reformation increased individual responsibility. Next to the affairs of the material world, the religious convictions are the only interests which touch the heart of every man, because, as a man, he feels himself called upon to act, and because the lowest knows that on this subject he is as responsible and free an agent as the highest. If the foundations of freedom were laid in religion, there would be no fear of its progress. Macchiavelli was aware of this truth, when he looked for a fundamental regeneration of the times and of states only in a reform of the Church. He recommended the tyranny of princes but as a necessary instrument for the accomplishment of this end; and although in 1513 the great seer announced an impending reformation, yet he perceived it was not possible (owing to the near vicinity of the papacy) that it should take place in his own country, and he looked with envious approbation upon the Teutonic races, to whose moral, warlike, and commercial capabilities he promised the future of the world. This prophecy has been verified. Those races who alone carried through the Reformation have also, with the old hierarchical religion, alone laid aside the habits of the middle ages. Only where papal influence yielded before freedom of belief and inquiry, and ecclesiastical rule in domestic life before freedom of thought and education, where the church hence-

forward belonged to the state, and not the state to the church, could the secular government be restored to its rights, to the moral importance and dignity, and to the protecting and formative influence which it possessed in antiquity. The abuses carried on by the nobles and ecclesiastics of the middle ages could only then be remedied; the want of education and self-dependence of the lower orders be gradually removed, the people be called to their share in the objects of human ambition, viz. political influence, education, and wealth, and a wider circle for individual improvement be described, which should not only embrace the privileged classes. For this reason, notwithstanding many vestiges of aristocratic times, society in every Protestant country took its tone immediately from the middle class; the prince himself laid aside the military aristocratic character of a chieftain, and the clergy, no longer secluded in a hierarchy, became members of the commonalty. In the Romanic nations, on the contrary, the habits of the middle ages lingered on more or less; a spiritual life and government formed itself among the Teutonic races, whilst among the former it was stifled under a soulless religion and slavish constitution. Spain should by her colonies have outbid all nations in the activity of commerce and trade, but the ignorance of arbitrary governments and priests interrupted (by unwise laws to regulate expenditure, production, and export) the energy of mercantile activity, already lamed by bigotry and the indolence of the people. Manufactures languished, the mines were neglected, and agriculture failed under burdens which belonged to the middle ages. The country was impoverished amidst the splendour of its power abroad; the people ate scanty meals off golden plates, and the fable of king Midas could be told of a nation. In the mean time the activity of Dutch and English merchants founded new states and powers, with entirely new resources, the result of commercial industry. This self-dependence and free exertion of the people sometimes, even in the absence of political rights, limited the despotic power of the prince, who retained a far wider and more open field of action in the Romanic countries. While the Spaniards and French continued vainly to exhaust their strength in striving after extensive monarchical dominions, the aim of the Teutonic nations at individuality was

perceptible even in the formation of their states. Everything tended towards the attainment of self-dependence and self-government within their natural frontiers, towards a partition of the land, and towards small dominions, or at the utmost, where larger nations were included in a state, towards federal union.—This bias towards the formation of small states was the life of the Teutonic nations, and had a very opposite effect to that produced by the desire for an extensive territory, which was peculiar to the Romanic nations, as it gave them an industrial character and produced an inclination towards peace. Even Holland and England were forced into the great wars with France and Spain, and it was only while fighting in self-defence that they acquired their power.

The new forms of German Protestantism in state and church required time for their maturity; or rather, the democratic developments, whose germ lay in the very foundations of Protestantism, could only gradually expand within the circumference of larger states. Yet, in Luther's time, when the very first foundations of liberty were only in the act of being laid, the scheme for the whole future edifice was sketched by some few, who had already determined on its immediate completion. A few sects, a few eager spirits, hurried on in the commencement of the Reformation to the results which could only follow this new direction of affairs at some future period, and which were in reality its most distant aim and end. The whole circle of ecclesiastical and political pretensions was already described, which were only in part demanded after the political changes had taken place in France and America, and which to this day have not been everywhere or entirely satisfied. Among the religious enthusiasts, a few, under the name of Inspirati and Anabaptists, had conceived the idea of a purification of Christianity and its forms, according to the dictates of reason; an idea which was only realized in the days of their great-grandchildren, whose expatriated missionaries found a home in America. In accordance with Luther's doctrine of the priesthood being common to all Christians, they proposed to decide church matters in assemblies of laymen, and that priests should be elected by the community; they professed the tenets of the latest modern Rationalists, when they demanded to be released from the necessity of belief in the letter of

Scripture, placed the Holy Spirit above the written word, and understood by the Holy Spirit nothing more than the mind and understanding of man; when they saw nothing in faith but action prompted by love; in Christ only a divine example of human conduct; and in the sacrament of the Supper nothing more than a solemn act of remembrance. Besides these demands for a church reform, a political reform was proposed, of so democratic a nature, that it could not be carried out for many years later. The abolition of feudal service, of villinage, of dues paid to the landlord in case of a death, of all unjust duties and customs, and of all the inequality of caste was urged: they asked for a restitution of communal property which had been illegally confiscated; for the prevention of, and compensation for, the injury done to the peasantry by the preserved game of the landlord; for uniformity in weights, measures, and money; for the appointment of popular tribunals of justice; the restriction of the powers of ecclesiastical courts; for non-committal on finding bail; and the consent of the commons to their own taxation: besides all which, they required the abrogation of princely, even where they desired to retain imperial authority, and, therefore, either a republic, or the unity of the state in Germany. All these and similar claims were advanced, during the excitements of the wars of the peasantry, and stipulated for in the charter of the insurgents, and in the writings of the Anabaptists. The question of the confiscation of ecclesiastical property was even urged upon the Diet. But these are claims which keep within the bounds of possibility, and of what has, occasionally, been arrived at by great nations; in other demands, such as that of being permitted to refuse to take an oath, or to serve in war, or to keep their Sabbath on Sundays, or even to baptize infants, they started principles which have only been maintained in peculiar sects; while, in their desire for a community of goods, they anticipated the views of much later schools, not yet proved capable of being practised, even in the most confined circles of society. Other enthusiastic spirits (which, even in our days, have not become extinct) looked back upon times which have passed away, and whose existence is no longer possible, and dreamed of the return of the gifts of prophecy, of the age of primitive Christianity, and of the

future of the Millennium. But that which is still more remarkable than these claims (anticipating principles which could only be established in later times) is the return to the fundamental maxims of liberty and equality, for which men were redeemed by Christ; the appeal to a divine right (the natural rights of man, as they were afterwards called); the foundation of church and state on an idea, on a universal and natural right, which was urged in opposition to the vexatious privileges of the few, and of castes.

But such great changes could not thus be effected at the first onset, and over so vast a space. No expectations of the advance of the slow movements of history over the wide stage of modern times are so apt to deceive as those of ardent spirits concerning the necessary duration of time for the accomplishment of a reform which is yet in its commencement. They have not only always deceived the enthusiast who aimed at an immediate attainment of his end, but even so powerful a mind as that of Hutten, as the cautious Milton, and so cool a thinker as Macchiavelli. Not one of them could have foreseen that several centuries would elapse before the sum total of the legacy bequeathed by the Reformation to mankind could be made available, even in the smaller communities of the Teutonic races. Luther alone, as a true historical prophet, weighed correctly the measure of the powers which could at that time be applied to the great work, and those which future times must add to them. Whilst he attacked the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church, and, with her, overthrew the infallibility of the Pope and the partition-wall between the conditions of the layman and the priest; whilst he purified the doctrine of the sacrament of the supper and the church ritual; combated the hypocrisy of works, and opposed to it his doctrine of justification by faith, he urged purity of motive, extinguished the fears of purgatory, and abolished fasts, confession, and penance, by which the Catholic Church formerly terrified mankind. Luther had already, in fact, sowed the seed of that which was in time developed by the Calvinist and Puritan, from the doctrines of the evangelists. But he would not for a moment endanger this development of time, for the shallow production which would have been the result of a forcing system. He did not aim at a rapid, but a sure and lasting success. He would not do

violence to anything. He had often shown, as in the case of the Inspirati of Zwickau, in those of Karlstadt, and towards Zwinglius, that he was not unheeding of their Rational innovations, but that he was impenetrable towards the tumultuary enthusiasts (the *perrumpanus* of Zwinglius), who grasped at things beyond their reach. He saw there was much for which his rude adherents were not prepared; he desired that men should form their own judgments; he wished to put the work he had begun into the hands of God, and to leave it to time.

Time also has by no means hurried on the course of vicissitudes in church and state, to which Luther's doctrine had given the impulse. It has rather moulded them into so invariable and regular a form, and placed them on so firm a foundation, that the law of all historical development, given us from above, can be easily and without effort discovered, and traced in the connivance and disposal of events. The Reformation in Germany and in England gave itself at first a monarchical shape, in the religious forms which state and church adopted under the influences of Luther and of Cranmer. In the west of Europe it passed through an aristocratic phase in Calvinism, and found its democratic development in the progress of Puritanism, which was temporary in England, but was established in America.

The character of the Lutheran Reformation was monarchical, even in its opposition to the democratic principles of the Freethinkers of that period, who would have carried back the principles of politics and religion to a natural right, and who pointed to the majority of the sovereign people for a decision. Luther set up the positive letter of Scripture against those who would make reason our sole legislator, and threw down the symbolic books as a rampart against the Anabaptists, towards whom even Zwinglius and Calvin assumed a posture of defence. The reformers are reproached with their paper pope, but neither in Switzerland nor the Netherlands could the Reformed Church escape from the necessity of giving such a resting-place to the excitement of men's spirits. The autonomia of the people on matters of faith could only be possible when toleration became general, for which men were not then ripe. Did not the wildest bacchanalian excesses of intolerant hatred, and the beginning

of a thirty years war of religion, break out over half the world, a hundred years later, on the occasion of the first Jubilee of the Reformation? Luther, therefore, remained in doubtful silence, even at the thought of introducing a Presbyterian form of church government, for which in 1526 plans were freely deliberated on, and proposed in Hesse. He was satisfied with only placing at the head of ecclesiastical matters men of cultivation of the clerical profession, who were to assist in educating the people. The state was to provide for the protection and support of this profession. By this arrangement, indeed, he fell into the apparent error of dependence on the secular power; but he was the more secure from dependence on an ecclesiastical power; and since the divine "mission of the Catholic priest became to the Protestant merely a secular function," a new papacy, with which the opponents of Luther are so ready to reproach him, was not possible. The monarchical character of the Reformation was indeed strengthened by this arrangement, but without monarchical aid its security at this early stage was not to be dreamt of. Occasional usurpations on the new Church by the secular government and the authority of the prince might be foreseen, but they appeared unavoidable, if the constant usurpations of the former Church on the state were to be removed. The divine right of investiture, which Luther transferred from the Pope (to whom it had till now exclusively belonged) to the secular magistrate, transferred at the same time, what was of still more importance, an increase to the power of the prince, and even imparted a sacred character to his supremacy. By these means he effectually dispersed the nimbus which had surrounded the head of papal authority. Luther, in every way, strengthened the secular power, because he had found it necessary to lean on it for support, since, without its help, how could he have fought a way for his cause, in a land torn by a thousand dissensions, against the strong and tremendous organization of the Roman Church, and against the combination of the papacy and the empire? If the people and their princes had gone different ways, what would have become of his cause in the thirty years war? Their union was indeed purchased at the heavy cost of the unconditional submission of the people to their prince. But in the religious wars, and in the treaties of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the struggle was

not for the liberty of conscience of the simple individual of the middle class, but, (and in this the monarchical character of the Lutheran church was fully displayed) for the right of princes (*cujus regio ejus religio*) to make reforms in their own lands, and to effect improvements in the church, as a benefit conferred by them upon the people. The danger thus threatened to the freedom of church and state, from the abuse of monarchical power, was evinced in England, rather than in Germany. There Henry VIII. laid aside the papal supremacy, only to set up his own omnipotence and infallibility in its place, in which he was neither restrained by the laws, nor by the convocations of the clergy. The apostolic mission, by which the priest was appointed, became secular in England, as in Germany, but the office was in the former country delivered over to the king. Episcopacy was however retained, and the power of ordination belonged to the bishop of the diocese; the papal authority therefore (as the Puritans expressed it) was only delegated to the bishops, and ecclesiastical forms and doctrine became as torpid as in the old church. With the order of bishops, the English retained the pomp of office and of the church ritual. Thus the higher clergy attained to an entirely aristocratic position, dependent on the sovereign, with whose interest theirs became so nearly connected, that James I. thought the existence of the monarchy depended on the existence of episcopacy. To the arbitrary will and authority which the monarch exercised in spiritual matters, he added an increase of his despotic power in the state, which, irritated by the opposition offered by the Calvinistic and Puritanic reformers among the people, rose to such a height, that it led to the Revolution, which for a time put an end to the English church and monarchy. The affairs of Germany assumed an entirely different form. Here, Luther's prophetic forethought permitted no prince to play the part of Pope. Here, the modest place occupied by the humble clergy, belonging to the middle class, did not make them so dependent on their superiors in worldly station, that religious freedom should so soon have been lost from among them. The petty princes also were in too close contact with their subjects, they shared too common an interest with them, which they had to defend against the emperor and the pope, not to fulfil the office intrusted to their despotic power, and,

however unwillingly, educate the people for freedom. No revolution was therefore to be dreaded here, but rather the re-actionary movement of the emperor and the pope, from whom, in the peace of 1552, the Protestants could only extort a kind of toleration in the shape of an armistice. If the German dismemberment and want of union prevented the outward completion of the liberty of the church, which at that time had been so hardly won, it was all the more perfect within. The church was territorial in Germany, her boundaries were the same as those of the state in which she was established, and she made a separate progress in each land. The absence of unity in the nation, or of a general assembly of the church, or of a great ecclesiastical body guided by one mind and dependent on a metropolis, made a constitution applicable to all, and a strictly dogmatical or liturgical agreement, impossible. Here there was not *one* evangelical church, which after the demolition of papacy would have gathered its members again together, to form a new association for one common creed, but, in accordance with the spirit of Protestantism, many evangelical churches.

This situation of ecclesiastical affairs corresponded precisely with that of the political changes which followed the Reformation in Germany. The monarch was indeed placed at the head of the church, and therefore became more influential, but a real foundation was laid for religious liberty, by the dethronement of the spiritual supremacy, and by no second church taking the place of the old. Thus also in the politics of Europe, the sovereign rule of individual princes, who reigned over distinctly different races, and not over a chance population and country, was finally settled; it was therefore an exceptional case, and only in this land, that the greater vassals were converted into the independent princes of petty German states, and, with that, the completion of absolutism itself was facilitated. But the dangerous power of the emperor, as well as of the pope, was thereby broken, and the confirmation of these petty states, ruinous as they proved to the power of Germany abroad, was, under the circumstances of those times, undoubtedly more advantageous than detrimental to her internal preservation, and was rather the result of necessity than choice. Every attempt to ame-

literate the constitution of the empire, as well as of the church, had for many centuries been baffled. This could only be accounted for by the degree of development and by the institutions of different places and countries. The political capabilities of the period were not equal to the task of giving solidity to the constitution of a greater confederation of the empire, which could at the same time have preserved order within, and power without. Switzerland and the Netherlands, within the circumference of their much smaller countries, could not succeed then, nor later even, when they were threatened by the most urgent dangers; how could it have taken place in Germany, under the eternal friction of her states against one another, of the nobles against the princes, and of these against the emperor? Two important conclusions equally impressed on Germany the unavoidable necessity of the autonomy of her sovereign princes; the weakness of the emperor would expose all the institutions of the empire to the dangers of anarchy; his strength would expose the same institutions to the danger which threatened them from the new resources and ambitious power of Austria. The sovereign princes were entirely thrown upon themselves and upon their own strength, to oppose the usurpations of anarchy, as, even under the mighty Charles V., the empire refused to supply aid to crush the insurrection of the peasantry, and a rebellion among the nobles, such as that of Sickengen,* or to act as umpire to decide the angry debates in the Diet. They were themselves compelled to put a stop to the right of private warfare, and to the violence of the feudal aristocracy; while at the same time their opposition to the emperor became a patriotic duty, a resistance to foreign oppression. The political problem resembled the ecclesiastical problem concerning the pope. The professed aim and endeavour of Maurice of Saxony was to save Germany from Spain and Rome, and to prevent her falling beneath the feet of priests and Spaniards. The overthrow of Charles V. was a victory of national principles over the foreigner; the assertion of the liberty of the Diet, and of the federal institution of the states, was a triumph over the unlimited power of the emperor. To prove to him he was not an absolute monarch, but only the first among his equals in the federal aristocracy of German princes, was an idea which had been started at the

* Franz von Sickengen, 1522.

league of Smalkald, and been contended for at the peace of 1552. The Protestant movement carried through the reform, which had been so long delayed by the combined power of the emperor and the pope. The executive and judicial authority of the former was now shared with the diet, the boundaries of the land were more strictly defined, the provision for the public safety rendered more efficacious, and the supreme tribunal of the empire received the form in which it long continued to exist. The interference of the pope in matters appertaining to the empire ceased of itself, the elective franchise of the princes was secured, and henceforth was never lost sight of by foreign powers, who dreaded the growth of Austria. The divided strength and dismembership of Germany thus gave a support to the injurious influence from abroad, but an impediment was also presented to the destructive measures of a foreign emperor, who strove to subject the whole people to his despotic will. The nation indeed resolved itself into its separate parts; hereditary succession, the further indivisibility of the land, the completion of the institution of the diet, gave a native strength to the power of the sovereign princes beyond that of the elective emperor, and thus the confederated states had the advantage over the monarchy. Although, when viewed in its secular as well as ecclesiastical policy, this advantage had been dearly paid for, yet, considered in the light of national independence and of European freedom, it was a real and undeniable gain. When the empire fell to the house of Austria, Germany was treated only as a means subservient to its ends. She was nothing but a dependent part of a nation, composed of many foreign states. Even in a national point of view, Germany had no reason to desire the unity which was then enjoined her; and still less so when considered in reference to the whole family of nations of this quarter of the world. It was the interest of all Europe that a great monarchical empire founded on views of Spanish policy should not be established, and more especially should be guarded against in Italy or Germany, whence a universal dominion would have made the greatest impression. It was important that the girdle of little states which formed a natural barrier from the North Cape to Sicily should be preserved from amalgamation into the great monarchical empire of the East and West. Finally, whatever might be the internal poli-

tical or ecclesiastical freedom of these separate states, it is nevertheless true that absolutism, which Germany escaped in the government of her single head, found its way later on into the separate partitions of her state, though in them it assumed a less pernicious form by being broken down and divided, and it can at least claim the merit of not only having presented no impediment to, but of having actually called forth, the great moral revolution of the eighteenth century in Germany, which promoted the progress of political freedom in Europe. Germany sustained a revolution in state as well as in church during the sixteenth century, but it was a monarchical revolution. The feudal nobility, who in every other western state of Europe succumbed in the encounter with kingly absolutism, conquered here in the person of its mightiest chiefs while opposed to imperial absolutism, and acquired an independent sovereignty, which was destined at a future period to sustain a civil in place of a military overthrow. It was a revolution of the diet in place of the German empire, which maintained itself in a monarchical-federalist sphere, while the states of the Netherlands and Switzerland, countries which had separated themselves from the empire, became a federal-aristocracy.

The wars of freedom in Switzerland, which happened before the date from which we commence our review of history, preceded, while the separation of the Netherlands from Spain under Philip II. followed, the events which took place in Germany under Charles V. Both these countries were actuated by the same Teutonic propensity to divide into small states, opposed to everything which tended to form one great state: an observation of peculiar interest when applied to Switzerland. It was not imperial or royal princes who first, and with most energy, strove for an accession of power, but families from within the narrow limits of a feudal state—the houses of Hapsburg and Burgundy, out of whose union sprang the power of Charles V., which threatened to overwhelm the world. The political wisdom with which these families directed their views towards this central point of Europe (Switzerland), apparently the most desirable possession to assist the growth of their power, is very remarkable. But what is still more remarkable is the national instinct by which

the Swiss, from the earliest days, aroused themselves to check the first germs of this power, and, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, successfully combated Hapsburg and Burgundy, when their encroachments were separate and only in the commencement ; and when the two houses became united under Maximilian, asserted and maintained their existence and independence. If Switzerland—the cradle of the house of Hapsburg—led the first struggle against Austria, the Netherlands—the cradle of Burgundy—took the lead in the prosecution of the German war against the house of Burgundy. Philip II. followed the example of Charles V. As Charles proposed to absorb Germany into his vast empire, his son resolved to make the Netherlands conform to the rest of his kingdom, which, by the acquisition of Portugal and her colonies, had received a compensation for the lost empire. The freedom of the states was to be yielded up to Spanish despotism ; self-government to foreign rule ; the independence of the provinces to the monarchy ; the consent of the people in matters of religion to Catholic compulsion. When the resolutions of the Council of Trent were forced upon the land ; when a Spanish council of state, in 1567, was appointed to fix the amount of taxation, and a Spanish army entered the country, more had occurred there to justify a rebellion, than had taken place in Germany during the interim. Burdens followed of a still more oppressive nature, resembling those with which the English afterwards reproached the Stuarts. The erection of a tribunal which, like the Star Chamber, committed unheard-of acts of cruelty ; the abolition of self-taxation ; and the introduction of impositions which weighed heavily upon commerce, had the same effect, as the ship-money of Charles I. in England. But, deeply as these political grievances were resented, the chief cause of separation might be traced here, as in Germany, to religious feeling, which, at that time, moved men more than patriotism. For, in every instance in which Spain yielded, she made an exception in religious matters, even where she consented to guarantee the constitution. Burgundy and the Netherlands, who, by reason of their political interests, had so much cause to be united, disputed on this subject with more virulence, than even the various Protestant sects of Switzerland and Germany with one another. When, in 1579–80, the northern

provinces (by the treaty of Utrecht) revolted from Philip II., they proceeded entirely on the principles of the Calvinistic Reformation, which had taken root there, viz. that a people and its representatives should maintain their natural rights against a tyrant, who, after being vainly admonished by them, still continues to act contrary to *his* duty. This step was regarded by many with trembling fears. They endeavoured hastily to retrieve it by the creation of a new monarchy, or even by an annexation to the powerful princely houses in their vicinity; and it was not their own will nor their own merit which saved the Netherlands, in spite of themselves, from a monarchy. The cause may rather be attributed to their receiving neither the countenance nor support of Germany; to England and France refusing their proffered crown; and to the casualty of death frustrating all hopes of the rule of Anjou or Orange. Although the republican form of government was established there, it can by no means be placed in comparison with the sudden advance to moderate monarchical-federal reform in Germany. The federal union which united the provinces was neither firmer nor politically better planned here than in Switzerland or Germany; and the same characteristic may be remarked in every confederation of Teutonic origin, even in America, that they only combined in times of danger, and that, notwithstanding the constitution, the tie is loosened on a return of security. It was according as danger threatened them from abroad that the frequent changes took place in the history of the Netherlands, and the preference was sometimes given to the government of one, (the Stadtholder,) sometimes to the federal party of the states-general, and again to the provincial aristocratic confederation of the municipal authorities. Notwithstanding these alterations, it was never constitutionally settled in whom the chief power of the union resided, whether in the states-general, or in the provincial assemblies. The house of Orange sometimes gave its support to the former, and once, by the overthrow of Olden Barneveldt, asserted their sovereignty. But the provincial assemblies had, in fact, seized on the whole power: the legislation, the administration of state and church, official employments, the right of granting pardons, taxation, the last decision in war and peace—all fell to their share. They, however, entirely depended on the municipalities, which

did not alone elect deputies to the assemblies (as the assemblies again to the states-general) but also exercised a kind of corporate veto; and the most powerful among the cities ventured, at times, like German princes and Swiss cantons, to form alliances with the most dangerous enemies of the nation. In the official correspondence of the states with Queen Elizabeth, the sovereign power was not, on that occasion, claimed by the provincial assemblies, but by their subordinate delegates, the municipal representatives. It may be here remarked, that the characteristic of the Teutonic nature, the bias entirely opposed to all established unity in the state, is always the same; in Germany it showed itself in a territorial form; here, and in Switzerland, it was provincial and cantonal, and, even more than these, municipal. This, perhaps, was a still less perfect form of the state than that in Germany, although a natural consequence of the history of their political life; for, like Switzerland, and even more than Switzerland, the Netherlands owed their peculiar character to the luxuriant growth and development of their municipalities. The infinite variety of life in the sphere of the middle class had early pushed aside the class of nobles and ecclesiastics, and the feudal system was here, as well as in the Italian republics, wholly destroyed. The greatest power of the republic of the Netherlands did not, therefore, either reside in the states-general or in the provincial assemblies, but in the cities, and there, fell into the hands of a narrow aristocracy. There was no thought here of a representation of the citizens, of democratic institutions, or of the elective franchise of the community. As in the Swiss towns, the government was in the hands of a patriciate, whose permanent members were at first chosen by the stadtholder, out of a list drawn up and proposed by the corporation, but, subsequently, at the time of the greatest development of the confederation and of the municipal authority, directly named by the corporation itself. This permanent aristocracy, although often broken by the combination of the people with the stadtholder, formed a strong rampart (only the stronger when it had recovered from these attacks) against all democratic innovations. The free municipalities were opposed to the feudal aristocracy; but, when they were removed, the citizens borrowed their habits and

laws ; the aristocracy continued, and only descended upon the middle class. The new liberties of the republic were as little founded upon natural rights as those in monarchical Germany ; but liberty and rights were facts in history, which were only defended and preserved from foreign aggression, and, as the opportunity offered, were enlarged in the hands of the possessor, rather than distributed over a greater number.

The aristocratic principle had taken as deep a root in the middle class of Switzerland and the Netherlands as the monarchical principle in the middle class of Germany ; and Luther could as little effect a change in this respect in the latter country, as Calvin's reformation could in the former. The constitution of the church rather accommodated itself to the governing principle in either state. Thus it was in Geneva, the mother and pattern state of Calvinism, that unembarrassed by the government or the authority of a prince, circumstances allowed of the erection of a new structure, such as scarcely would have been ventured on elsewhere. The model of a republic was here conceived, among a rude people, composed of various races, which, for a time, had passed through the most fearful course of immorality. At the first attempt to purify this Sodom, Calvin was expelled ; so much the more comprehensive was his plan of reformation after his recall. He then admonished in the double character of a Grecian legislator and of a Christian reformer. Luther, in his reform, as in the first commencement of Christianity, and in accordance with the spirit of the gospel, remained passive towards the state, and finally resigned the church to its protection ; but Calvin remodelled church and state together, in the Theocratic spirit of the old Mosaic law. This forms the distinction between the spirit of Calvinism and of Lutheranism. In the union of state and church, Calvin endeavoured to point out to each its proper sphere, and to maintain their respective rights ; ecclesiastical and secular jurisdiction and punishments, censure and sentence, were accurately defined ; but the combined ecclesiastical and secular superintendence, and the restriction on the belief and thought of every individual, in outward and inward morals, formed so fearful a discipline, that in Geneva itself it soon led to cruel examples of bloody intolerance. There were, besides, no popular institutions

which could maintain an equipoise to this political and censorial violence. The petty council, in which the real civil power resided, and the consistorium (which was composed of lay and ecclesiastic authorities, who assumed the supremacy in that censorial supervision by which, as a theocracy, it actually governed the state), reintegrated themselves, according to the system formerly adopted by the aristocracy; whose habits prevailed in every municipality of Switzerland and the Netherlands. The most free institution of Calvinism was the presbyterian form of church government, which consisted of a mixed assembly of laymen and ecclesiastics. The interpretation of the Scriptures and decision on matters of faith belonged to them. The democratic character of these assemblies terrified Catholic France, when the Calvinistic doctrine established itself there. Yet even this assembly was aristocratic in its principle. Both the lay assistants, (the elders with whom every clergyman was obliged to appear at the synods of the French Calvinists) were elected by the consistorium from among the people, and only a veto was reserved for the congregation. Calvinism maintained the same aristocratic character in the Netherlands, although, from its origin, and the position of its party, it appeared to be thrust completely on the democratic side. Fanatic emigrants from Germany and France first preached it there under the Spanish government, whose cruel persecutions, and scenes of war, made the zeal of the clergy and people still more fanatical, and whose intolerance caused the separation of Belgium. When the republic was first established, this spirit of the people was not shared in by the patricians; and when the celebrated Arminian controversy tore the state by the fury of party spirit, the municipal authorities supported the side of that doctrine, so important to the future progress in the reformed church, and in which the austerity of the Calvinistic dogma of predestination was softened to satisfy the natural desire for freedom. Education and toleration, the interests of commerce, intercourse with the world, and the political maxim that the church ought to be subject to the state, inclined the patricians towards Arminianism; but the clergy, who would have had the church independent of the state, the people, who blindly followed them, and the fugitives from Belgium, who were strangers in the country, and naturally opposed to the aristocracy, all

advocated strict Calvinism. In the synod of Dort (1618) the authority of the Stadtholder, who aimed at obtaining power for himself, favoured the democratic party against the Arminians. But scarcely had the Calvinists proved victorious, when they were themselves obliged to submit to the overpowering influence of political circumstances. They had to maintain the supremacy of the state over the church, for which the aristocracy had all along contended, as well as the church constitution of 1591, created by the aristocracy for the express purpose of retaining the ecclesiastical appointments, and through them the church itself, in their hands. We may perhaps discover in the very essence of the Calvinistic doctrine itself the aristocratic principle which we have described in its constitution. The doctrine of fatalism (*decretum horribile*) supposed election to be a necessary attribute of the foreknowledge of the Creator, by which power he in his mercy and judgment calls men to eternal salvation in his heavenly kingdom, or excludes them from it, without regard to their merit or conduct. This doctrine was only repulsive to a few philanthropic natures, like those of Arminius, Melancthon, Bolsec, and their followers; severity was rather a recommendation to the austere morality and to the taste for astrological studies of a superstitious age; it was also in accordance with the spirit of the existing institutions of the state, to whose dignities and power none were admitted but such as were called to them by the favour or will of the supreme authority. If we look back to the new founder of the Augustinian doctrine, to Calvin himself, the nature of the man will explain its aristocratic character, as well as the conservative basis on which he insisted, as much as Luther on his doctrine of the sacrament of the Supper. Calvin, by his collegiate education, by his classical and law studies, and by the perspicacity of his writings, attracted the higher and educated classes of society, more than the man of the people, Luther. From the commencement of his reformation, Calvin turned to the courts of France and of Ferrara, and was from that time in constant communication with the higher orders in France, and for a long time corresponded with the nobles of Poland. It is well known that it was chiefly through the nobles that the Calvinistic reformation gained access to France and Scotland, while the lower orders of the

former country always adhered to the mass. Calvin's clear perception of the conduct of worldly affairs left him free from prejudice with respect to any particular form of government. However severe might be his protestations against the unlimited power of princes, he was far from sharing in the opinion of the right of resistance against the magistrate, as it was afterwards given out by Calvinistic preachers. On this head he was as cautious as Luther; and when the nobles of France in the reign of Francis I. advised an appeal to arms, they maintained the principle of the German precedents in the transactions of the league of Smalkald; Calvin himself was disinclined to decide the question in the sense of a jurist; and was even more so than Luther, who after a long time and very unwillingly countenanced resistance, and then only resistance to the Diet, and on matters of faith, as sanctioned by the express words of Scripture—We must obey God rather than man.

If Calvin was not more free or less conservative in his dogmas, nor less moderate in his political opinions, than Luther, there lurked in his reforms at least a greater disposition to advance the next step in the democratic progress of Protestant ideas in church and state. In ecclesiastical matters the simple Liturgy was more accordant with democracy, and the constitution of the church allowed of freer development. Intolerance towards old-established as well as recent errors attracted bold antagonistic spirits, who, dissatisfied with the toleration granted by Luther, would allow no freedom to others. The progressive tendency of the policy of the Reformer of Switzerland is evinced by his project for ameliorating the condition of the state as well as of the church. Luther was aware that the secular government in his country needed him also; but he dreaded a second Munster, and thought it advisable to refrain from this project. It was otherwise with Zwinglius, whose soldierlike and practical nature had conceived the idea of remodelling the constitution from the commencement; and with Calvin, whose law studies perhaps had fitted him more for the vocation of a statesman, than his inner light for that of a church reformer. When Calvinism thus prepared to aim at the state as well as the church, it carried its spirit of predestination and intolerance into political matters. Its radical reforms at once armed

the ecclesiastical despotism of Rome, and the secular despotism of monarchy against it. All the intolerance of the Caraffa (Paul IV.) sprang from his zeal against Calvinism. The absolutism of France and of Austria combined to counteract the republican movements of the French towns, and to check those aspirations in the beginning of the seventeenth century, which proposed that Austria should adopt the constitution of Switzerland and the Netherlands. Adverse fortune, and the unfortunate results of the Calvinistic reformation in Western Europe, the consequence of this reaction, still further embittered its adherents. Zwinglius, in defiance of Luther, and in the full conviction of the reasonable nature of his doctrines, early assumed that Spain, France, and England would adopt his views; and it was therefore upon these countries, where the deep tones of Luther's German voice could not be heard, that the adherents of Calvin threw themselves, as upon that which was destined to be theirs. But the zeal of Zwinglius only served to fasten Catholicism on half Switzerland, as that of the followers of Calvin had on half of the Netherlands. The Reformation never reached Spain. The end of Calvinism was defeated in many ways both in England and France, and this defeat was chiefly to be attributed to the hard blows which its discipline aimed at the morals, and its church government and its political maxims at the institutions of the state. This experience clearly demonstrates that time is required to mature the work of the Reformation. The free tendencies of Calvinism hastened towards their end at too quick a pace, and therefore called forth a general, and, by being general, fearful re-action of Catholicism, which spread over the whole world from the accession of Paul IV. to the Pontifical chair, to the thirty years war, and threatened at one time violently to arrest the progress of its democratic development.

The Roman See, while it still partook of the free character of the Medicean age, while it stood alone opposed to the doctrine of Luther, and feared the advantage which the schism in the church might give to Charles V., made an unsuccessful attempt to enter into a compromise with Protestantism.—When Calvinism with its implacable spirit had, in the first sixty or seventy years of the sixteenth century, made a rapid conquest of the North of Europe—when the papacy had found a steady

support in Philip II., and was secured from assault by the dissensions among the Protestants of Germany—when the Netherlands and England had become allies, the determined opposition of the two creeds was decided. The Roman see and church, its life and discipline, principles and doctrine, underwent a change, not in the clear light of Italian and German civilization, but in the dark ascetic spirit of Spanish bigotry. From this spirit sprang the policy of the Spanish monarch, the Inquisition, and the order of Jesuits: the authority of the pope was restored by these three fearful instruments, which arrested the progress of the Reformation in the Romanic countries, and prepared to use moral and physical force to reconquer that part of Christendom, which had fallen away from the Catholic faith. In a long course of the most reckless and persevering re-actionary movements, the papal court in the above-mentioned period, urged on the Spaniards to use violent measures against the Netherlands; the night of St. Bartholomew added its triumphs; the Jesuits carried on their work of conversion in all places, Romanic, semi-Teutonic, and Slavonic—in France, Belgium, Austria, Poland,—wherever Protestantism had left the minds of men unfortified. The hatred of Spain against England, who offered the most powerful and sisterly support to the adherents of the Protestant faith, was roused from the time of Elizabeth to that of Charles I. The Bavarian dukes with a view to their own interests, and the spiritual princes moved by ecclesiastical zeal, determined to attempt a restoration of Catholicism, which, later on, Ferdinand II. hoped to accomplish. In these re-actionary movements the great advantage and impulse given by a monarchical leader was proved; it was exhibited in strong contrast to the divisions among the Protestants; the disturbance caused to the unity of the Catholic world by the various political interests in France was as necessary to save the Protestant cause in Germany, as the whole resources of the democratic strength of the Protestants was required to retain it in England. We distinguish three periods in this critical epoch, during which the re-action of Catholicism had reached its height (in the first half of the seventeenth century), and which mark the great features of its final course. It entered and departed from France, Germany, and England by different ways. In France, from the time

of Richelieu, it promoted the despotic power of the prince, in consequence of which the Protestant faith declined, and finally abandoned the country. In Germany, during the thirty years war, Catholicism menaced the established representative institutions of the empire and the church, and ended by their restoration and by its reconciliation with them. In England it roused all sects of Protestants to a resistance against the Stuarts, and, led on by a strong impulse in the opposite direction, the Puritans effected a democratic change in state and church.

Protestantism in France was but a passing vision ; we shall only take a superficial view of its fortunes, as we propose in the next place to trace the path of the Reformation in Germany. In France, from its commencement, the new doctrines attacked the absolutism of the monarch, which had been longer and more firmly established there than elsewhere ; Francis I. wisely looked with suspicion on Protestantism, as aiming at the "downfall of all monarchies, divine and human ;" he and his successors therefore opposed it with fire and sword. The history of the Protestants in France, before they formed a political party, was a history of martyrs ; of a succession of horrible civil wars, to end, after a prolonged peace, in the martyrdom of the new church itself. This conclusion was inflicted on the Protestants by the bigotry of royal despotism. But it must not be denied that during half a century, while Protestantism was struggling for her existence, she aimed a most destructive blow at the great national interests of France. We shall, further on, point out in greater detail how much Calvinism endangered here the unity of the state, a unity which the labour of many centuries of despotism had bequeathed to the nation, and which it was neither in accordance with its inclinations nor for its advantage, to sacrifice. Protestantism lost in actual value during this political strife, and Henry IV. only learnt, in a different way from Catherine de Medicis and Charles V., to look upon matters of faith as means subservient to other ends ; he was obliged to relinquish his Huguenot tendencies to the irreconcilable hatred of all the large communities of the kingdom and of the city of Paris ; even the Protestant clergy had the wisdom to exhort the king to return into the bosom of the Catholic church. Calvinism, by the burdensome austerity of its moral censures, finished by

losing its attraction to the nobles. It appeared to be better fitted for the virtuous aristocracy of the middle class than for the nobles by birth, who soon returned to the splendour of the court. As soon, however, as the higher classes withdrew themselves from Calvinism, the same results followed as in England; forced back upon the people, its democratic elements appeared, which terrified every government. In the Edict of Nantes (1598) the Protestants extorted the privilege to hold ecclesiastical synods and secular congregational meetings, at all times and in all places, without the sanction of any authority, and to admit foreigners and send deputies to foreign meetings without a special permission. These privileges were untenable, and more than the Catholics themselves possessed; given or taken, they excited suspicion and disunion in the country. Suspicion increased after the death of the mild Henry IV., when the court entered into a close relationship with Spain, and appeared prepared to commence an altered policy towards the Protestants. The latter had long ago formed a separate power, which was treated with, as with a foreign state. They had their own place of arms, from whence they could extend a hand across the sea to Protestant England, and over the land to the Palatinate. The Palatine had already been chosen in the sixteenth century the head of a league to govern France; how much greater was the danger, when, in the reign of Louis XIII., he entertained the idea of placing the crown of Bohemia on his own head, when the star of Austria began to fade, and when the imperial crown might pass into the ambitious house of the Palatinate! a successful revolution in Bohemia would have been the signal for a fresh revolt of the Protestants in France, and have entailed new anarchy on the land. It was not then to be wondered at if Richelieu, when he began to govern Louis XIII. and France, should have represented the Protestants to the king as the most dangerous enemies of his throne and country, and have overthrown with violence their political power, warlike fortresses, and foreign alliances. He had no prejudice against their religion, yet he smoothed the way for that system of government by which, under Louis XIV., they were once more extirpated in France.

In Germany the people were in the habit of remaining passive in all ecclesiastical movements which had a reference

to the state; but, even here, the restless and dangerous spirit of Calvinism did not prove false to itself, though its most prominent characteristics only appeared in the sphere of the monarchy, where it had taken root during the disturbances in France. The imperfect settlement of religious differences had left here the germ of fresh discord. To the maxim of the Catholic church, that church property is inalienable, and that bishops and chapters are the only administrators thereof, the Catholics had added the so-called ecclesiastical proviso, by which every bishop and prelate who went over to the Protestant religion, forfeited his office. The temptation offered to spiritual princes to become secular and hereditary lords was thus removed. This proviso was, in the course of time, here and there counteracted. The Catholic clergy demanded the restitution of the property they were thus deprived of—the Protestant armed to defend their possession. The great contentions which reigned on these occasions would, however, have passed away, had not the house of the Palatinate, by its Guelphic policy, engaged Austria in a conflict for her existence, at the very time that the Protestant nobles of France, by threatening the unity of the state, engaged that kingdom also in a conflict for self-preservation. The Counts Palatine had been all along in connexion with the French Huguenots; they were allied by marriage with the houses of Orange and Stuart; they sympathised, with Calvinistic zeal, with all the Protestant movements in Europe; permitted their princes to join them in the wars in France and the Netherlands; and nourished the idea in their house of an extensive league for the furtherance of the Calvinistic reformation. In the great schemes of Henry IV., hostile to Austria, the Palatinate, as the head of the Protestant league (1608), played a conspicuous part. But, even when, by the death of Henry, the best hopes of Protestantism were broken, the fortunes of the house of Austria were yet at stake; the members of the family were at war with one another; the Austrian Protestants were ready to revolt; Bohemia in open rebellion, offering its crown to the Count Palatine; whilst at that very time a pretender laid claim to Hungary.* The Palatine they first conceived the plan which stirred the most energetic minds of Germany during the Peace of Westphalia, and

* Bethlen Gabor, 1620.

again in our times, and proposed to thrust Austria not only out of the empire, but out of the kingdom itself. Sully predicted the worst for this house, if a brave and statesmanlike emperor did not shortly spring from it, who could unite the kingdom and its several parts. Neither the courage nor the political wisdom of Ferdinand was equal to this task. His powers did not exceed the craft and spirit of intrigue he had inherited from Charles V., and by means of which he first took advantage of the irresolution of the Protestants, who were without a leader, of the splits and jealousies between Saxony and the Palatinate, between Lutheranism and Calvinism, in order to disperse the Protestant league; then defeated each petty enemy singly; and, finally, instead of conciliating them by toleration, or binding them to Austria by granting them their liberty, he, following the example of Charles, destroyed his own work, by the cruel and fanatical use he made of victory. When the emperor suppressed the Protestant religion in the Palatinate, Bohemia, and Austria, and, by the Edict of Restitution, in 1629, excluded the Reformers from religious toleration, and commanded that all Catholic church property which had been confiscated since the peace should be delivered up, he attacked possessions of seventy years' standing, and threatened almost every prince of the empire with losses in land and revenue. He thus announced his intention of annihilating the Protestant religion, which, like Richelieu and the Stuarts, he associated with insurrection and anarchy. He resolved as unscrupulously on a return to the political schemes as well as measures of Charles V., in an endeavour to obtain unity in the state and increased power in the empire. He discontinued the sittings of the diet, made and deposed the princes of the empire; declared himself possessed of unlimited authority, independent of the ordinances of the diet, and beyond the reach of the imperial court of judicature; and, in the course of a few years, imposed burdens such as none of his predecessors for a hundred years back had ventured upon. Not content with introducing Spanish troops, like Charles V., he also maintained at the cost of the empire a larger imperial army than had ever before been seen; garrisoned the fortified places as if he had been a despotic ruler, and appointed Wallenstein as their leader, who, like Stein in 1813, would have gladly put an end to all princes and electors,

and restored the power of the monarchy. This produced the first ebb in Austria's fortunes. It tore asunder the narrow band between the emperor and the Catholic league, whilst at that very time occurred the invasion from Sweden, then the last Protestant country from whom deliverance could be hoped, since the Catholic re-action had only shortly before failed in an attempt which it had made there. Later on, the strong influence of the English republic, opposed to the great progress of this re-action, assisted to hasten the end of the war in Germany, and to produce an issue favourable to Protestantism. The treaty of Augsburg was confirmed by the peace of Westphalia, and was extended to the Reformers. The sovereign power of the states was acknowledged and increased; the imperial power once more diminished; and the constitution of the empire so loosened within itself, that it was prepared from that time for its final dissolution. This favourable issue was not, as under Charles, won by the sole power of Germany. She purchased the weakness of Austria, at the expense of adding to the strength and influence of her foreign allies. Millions of inhabitants were lost to the empire, and gained by Sweden and France; the separation of Switzerland and the Netherlands was consented to. The emperor is reproached with having impaired the empire (*angustus ab angustando, non augustus ab augendo*); yet such was the corroding mistrust between the states of the empire and Austria, that, though the greatest aversion was felt towards the foreign victors, no reconciliation could ever be effected between the two. This is to be the more lamented if we suppose the possibility of a happier result; it becomes less deplorable, if we remember the probabilities of a worse, which were contained in the period. If the federal constitution of the empire, and German partition, so deeply rooted in the character of the nation, had not been secured; if the exhaustion of fruitless conflicts had not proved a safeguard to the new faith; if the rivalry of France and Austria had been again awakened, the successes of Louis XIV. in the state and church of Austria would have spurred him on to fresh attempts to compass one universal sovereignty—political and religious. Germany would have learnt the despotic influence of French policy indirectly through Austria, and not the free influence of French literature directly through

the medium of her petty states. She would, with Austria, have been a monarchy, but necessarily have shared the decline which lay in the cessation of progress in the interior of that country, where the recent intellectual culture of the eighteenth century, which promised an entire renovation of the youth and national life of divided Germany, found little access.

A re-action as favourable to Protestantism as that which had taken place in France and Germany since the death of Henry IV. was produced by Calvinism at the same period in England. England, by her Reformation, was brought into frequent collision with the Catholic powers, and was by them borne along on her path of greatness. It was under the Tudors, whose strength lay in the middle class, that, like all Teutonic states, England was permitted a peaceful development of her internal resources: but even the fortunate introduction of the Reformation, which owed its existence to the sensual disposition of Henry VIII., led also, by the chance of his divorce from the Spanish Katharine, to a rupture with Spain, who from that time never ceased, by intrigues, projects of marriage, war, and violence, to lay snares for England, as she had already done for France. The Roman See emulated this hostility of the Spanish princes, and the popes, from Pius III. to Urban VIII., neglected no opportunity of stirring up their hatred against England. As long as Spain was to be feared, the Reformation maintained its monarchical character in England. A popular Reformation had met this royal one from its commencement. It was violently repressed by Henry VIII., but under Edward VI. endeavoured to acquire influence by some concessions in matters of dogmatism to the spirit of the Lutheran doctrine. When Queen Mary restored Catholicism, many English Protestants fled to Germany and Switzerland, adopted Calvinistic principles, and imbibed an aversion to the pompous English liturgy and prelacy; a reform of the Reformation became a watchword to many after Protestantism had returned with the reign of Elizabeth. Knox reformed Scotland entirely in the spirit of Calvinism. From this fasthold in a neighbouring country, Puritan and Calvinistic principles entered England, and took the place hitherto occupied by Lutheran opinions, particularly among the class of merchants and small proprietors. Demo-

cratic ideas of policy followed in their train. The fugitive and persecuted Puritans, who grasped at that which lay in a far distant future, brought with them from Geneva the theocratic zeal of the Old Testament, and returned irritated and mutinous from suffering. Hostile to the pomp of the church, they also hated the pomp of courts. They carried the aversion they felt to the conformity forced upon them by the state, to the state itself—their hatred of the Pope of Rome, to the sovereign, the head of the English church. They desired the popular government of synods and parliaments in place of the monarchical rule of bishops and kings. From Monarchists they had become Republicans. As long as Elizabeth lived, the Puritans kept quiet out of consideration for a princess, who had herself personally suffered under Catholicism, who had protected the state abroad from Papacy and Spanish rule, and in close alliance with Henry IV. of France, who called her his “second self,” had maintained the Reformation and the freedom of the Netherlands. The Queen, however, on her side, partook largely of the instinctive monarchical aversion for this political-religious sect, with which the princes of the continent were infected, and which, after her, the Stuarts carried to the greatest height. Under James I. the English church first felt itself independent of Rome, and emulated royalty in making the Puritans sensible of its supremacy. The bishops attributed a divine origin to episcopacy, as the king to princely power, and like him claimed to be solely responsible to God. This doctrine, which mocked at all agreements and oaths, was held in as great a horror by the Puritans, as the whole alliance between the king and the church, which they named “the Goddess of Ephesus.” Thus, during the reign of Charles I., absolutism in church and state, the violence of the archbishop (Laud) and of the minister (Strafford), spiritual and secular inquisitions, and arbitrary tribunals, went hand in hand. The king discontinued the parliaments, as the German emperor the diets, and violated the laws of the land, even those he had himself instituted, as deliberately as Ferdinand in his kingdom. Charles used the ship-money, to advance towards a system of arbitrary taxation, as Ferdinand dispensed with the diet, and supplied its place by separate assemblies of the states, for the same end. In both countries the rulers aimed at the maintenance of a standing army

which should repress every attempt at resistance. But here, as in Germany, the attack on religion in the edict of restitution gave the signal for a revolution. When Laud had suppressed dissent in England, the liturgy was to be introduced into Scotland, and Calvinism was thus to be attacked in its stronghold. This occasioned the rebellion in Scotland, and the resistance of the parliament, which necessity alone had compelled the king to summon. If at that time, when the republican party (the Independents) stood yet in the background, and the moderate Presbyterian party were the leaders in parliament, the crown had continued to yield as it had begun, England would have obtained a reform in state and church, without a revolution or re-action. Arbitrary tribunals were abolished, the Act of Habeas Corpus was secured, taxation made to depend on the consent of parliament, the forest laws ameliorated, and other privileges of Norman feudalism, the signs of foreign rule and conquest, and the burdens on land, removed. The interference in church matters counteracted this reform in the state. Scotland was therefore restored to her former footing, and a constitution was introduced into England similar to that of Scotland in these days; the assembly of synods took the place of the convocation of bishops, the Presbyterian service that of the church. But such great changes cannot be effected at an easy cost. Another rupture followed between the parliament and the king, and the republican flood swept over the moderate party. The European, Catholic, Absolutistic re-action at that time (1642) was threatened with destruction; when Austria yielded to Germany, and Richelieu, the strong support of the royal omnipotence in France, died.

And now the time seemed to have arrived in England when the democratic development of Protestantism should take root, and the ideal of the Anabaptists—the reign of reason in state and church—should be fulfilled. Ardent spirits were not wanting who, sanguine in their hopes, imagined that all the nations of the earth would rise, from the Pillars of Hercules to the Indian Ocean, to win back their lost freedom; and that island inhabitants should spread throughout the world a nobler plant than that which Triptolemus carried from land to land. The responsibility of a king who held no law sacred, was, according to the strictest

principles, rejected by the people ; and a man like Milton, of the most sincere piety and the purest character, boldly ventured to justify their conduct. The republic was introduced ; but obtained no sure footing under the monarchical protection of Cromwell, and the military rule of his army. It is of extreme importance for the observation of the instinctive workings of the Teutonic race, and of the gradual formation of Teutonic states, to remark what the sound republicans, who had imbibed the spirit of the ancients, together with the fanatical levellers from among the mass of the people, strove to make of the republic, and what they would have succeeded in making, had its continuance been longer. Among these republicans, Milton had adopted the same views for England which the pilgrim fathers despaired of introducing amidst institutions of six hundred years, and only accomplished in later times, in America. Western Rome, according to his schemes, should give the world the example of a greater republic than the Netherlands, and could succeed the easier, since, after Cromwell's death, no house of Orange appeared to threaten a decline into a monarchy. In the new republic Christian equality was to be granted to all ; the distinctions of rank were to cease ; privilege yield to merit ; overgrown estates (Norman serfdom, which required the curb of an agrarian law) be abolished ; the system of leases be mitigated ; and, as the Anabaptists had proposed, a council should be instituted to provide better for the protection of the means by which the people earn their livelihood, for manufacture and trade, by a freer code of regulations with respect to the navigation of rivers and seas, and the use of forests and pasture-lands. In order to prevent the administration of justice depending on distant places, self-government in communes and counties formed a main principle in this new system. A senate, taken from parliament, elected for life, or with a periodical rotation of a certain number of the members, was to be placed at the head of the state ; but a majority of all the representatives of the counties could make a general protest against the laws of the senate, without being able, as in Holland, singly to abrogate any one law. Here there should not, be, as in the Netherlands, a union of many sovereignties in one republic, but of many republics in one sovereignty ; so that, like all the Teutonic states, a federal constitution would have arisen, which,

from its peculiar combination of provincial self-dependence with monarchical power, would have taken a central position, and have formed a point of transition between that which then existed in the Netherlands, and that which has since been effected in America. The church would have been formed after the same model as the state; prelacy and even the order of priests would have been abolished; the clergy elected, and paid by the community, and neither ordained by the church nor appointed by the state. A religion was aimed at beyond all creeds and formularies. Nonconformists, who wished to live purely after God's word, as their conscience allowed them to comprehend it, were to be tolerated. Separation into sects was rather to be desired than feared. The native truth of religion, and man's native freedom in the state, were relied on with confidence. In this also Milton, like other Calvinistic sages, announced the fundamental principle of the future Americans, that freedom is not a complication of acquired rights, belonging to certain classes and bodies of men, but a native right of man; and he called men, who, like Salmasius, were the champions of absolutism, contemptible slave-dealers, when they asserted that people or individuals could possibly alienate their claims to freedom.

A philosopher might theorize on the possibility of such a constitution; but even at that period it failed in practice, owing to the low state of education, and perhaps still more to the attachment of the people to the old-established and long-tried institutions of England. It failed, owing to the low state of education; for, even on the new soil of America, which presented none of the impediments of an old country, the Puritans did not wholly succeed in carrying out all their theories in religion and policy, from their want of political experience and intellectual cultivation. It failed, more especially from the attachment of the entire population to old forms and institutions. The republicans were a small minority; the nobles and clergy had good reason to expect their restoration in a land, where even the inequalities of class had become dear to the people, from the wholesome institutions with which it was connected. The merchants thought their interests could only be secured under the monarchy. The republic, therefore, was chiefly supported by the army. The state continued without any established

form, maintained by the power of arms abroad, and by a just government at home, under the strong protecting arm of Cromwell. The government of the church was equally uncertain; since the despotic will of the Protector was as influential as that of the whole community. Cromwell was himself, however, uneasy under the omnipotence derived from the army, which is, perhaps, the strongest proof which could be adduced of the nature of the Teutonic people. While every petty revolution in Romanic states produced a usurping military leader, such an event was either prevented, or the influence it might have exerted was diminished and shaken off, in every great Teutonic movement. In a military country like Switzerland, such a phenomenon was never witnessed. The heroes of the house of Orange were kept within bounds during the eternal wars of the Netherlands. Purely military countries, like Austria and Prussia, never submitted to the rule of a military chief; and Germany would no more have suffered a Wallenstein, than America would have endured an emperor in Washington. Thus Cromwell, to whose share the great part of Cæsar had fallen, voluntarily strove to return to parliamentary institutions. He would have gladly re-established the monarchy, though he would have wisely limited its powers. The republic, as well as military despotism, was an exceptional condition in England, out of which the nation returned in a tumult of re-action, in the hurry of which even Scotland was borne along, to monarchy and the church. The bitterest dregs of re-action had once again to be swallowed in England. James II., in the pay of Louis XIV., did not only aim at the unlimited power of the church and monarchy, but, with the same spirit as the king of France, regardless of consequences, he endeavoured to restore the Catholic faith in Britain. The Nonconformists sank at first under the most fearful of persecutions; and, when the abolition of the Edict of Nantes had been effected in France, an attempt was made in England and Scotland (by a policy worthy of the Bourbons) to seduce the persecuted sect, in the first heat of their rage, into a league with the Catholics against the High Church party, at a time when, by the declaration of indulgence and by the abolition of the Test Act, a decisive step had been taken towards the restoration of Catholicism. The Protestant settlements in Ireland were bestowed at discretion upon

Catholics, with the view of forming a Catholic force, with which it was intended to upset the constitution of state and church in England. Before his son was born, the king entertained the traitorous design, in case of a Protestant succession, to seize on Ireland, and place it under the protection of Louis XIV. But once again the nature of the English people, in whom the love of freedom and of the Protestant religion was more deeply rooted than in Austria or in France, triumphed. All classes and parties united to oppose James; and William of Orange, invited by the first men of the country, had no difficulty in dispossessing the mischievous dynasty. No one, even after all they had experienced, objected to the monarchy, although the new king had only held the first place in a free republic. Though William III. was a Calvinist, no one in England demanded any further interference with the church. A return of the republic was not desired, although they were assisted in the recovery of their liberty by a free state, whose fame at that time eclipsed the most splendid monarchies of the world. The restored and purified constitution rather maintained its essentially aristocratic character, which was not unnatural at a time when, in consequence of the great re-actionary movement in state and church, reaching from Spain to Poland and Sweden, all the kingdoms of Europe presented a new aspect, and seemed to have nearly recovered their former position. England also mainly owed this second revolution to the nobles and clergy, who did not, therefore, abuse their power to remodel the constitution in order to serve oligarchical and exclusive ends of their own. But, even at so early a period, the English government presented to later times the great pattern of a mixed constitution, whose chief excellence (according to the opinion of its most renowned statesman—Pitt) must be sought in the maintenance of the several advantages of the monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, without prejudice from either.

The political and ecclesiastical views which some prospective minds in Germany had arrived at in the commencement of the Reformation, overlooking all the circumstances of the age, was only first attained in the American constitution. In England other advances were made towards the same end, by an entirely different route, which preserved all that was approved of in existing institutions. Both constitutions work well

in their respective states. Fortune, power, freedom compete for the prize, as well as the fame of each. The construction of the English constitution has not followed a regular plan from the commencement, but whoever completed the edifice knew well how to bring the parts which preceded their labours into harmony with their views. Centuries have been at work, but material and labour have in every period been of the best sort. No modern state has passed through so normal a history as England, the phases of development have nowhere else been as distinctly and clearly defined. The old Teutonic constitution under the patriarchal monarchy does not appear anywhere in such perfection as with the Anglo-Saxons: no race of people have left so rich a treasury of law-books and literature in the first stages of the formation of their state. The feudal system was not as perfect in its commencement anywhere else, nor did it continue during so long a period, as in England under the Normans; and there is not another aristocracy which has shown as much capacity in political matters, as the English. Royal despotism also has nowhere used its power abroad and at home with so much benevolence, and abused it as little as here. And finally, in no other country have the commons brought so large an accession of strength to the state, and won for themselves so great a political influence. Therefore in 1688, when the constitution was examined into and secured by new stipulations, not one of the elements of the state (all of which had proved their utility) was omitted or curtailed. The maintenance of these efficient and well-tried forces was believed to increase the power of the state. The commons conceded their large estates to the nobles, which the republic would have divided by an agrarian law; they felt that their own security lay in their industry, to whose greater development they were not less impelled by the fact that the possession of most of the land was exclusively in the hands of the aristocracy. The nobles conceded to the commons the right to their transferable property; the industry of the middle class was fostered by the state, and their power in the Lower House was increased. They well knew how indispensable their right of taxation and their credit made them, and felt their importance and political influence secure. The two classes were not separated by the advantages or disadvantages of birth, but united together by family

connexions ; their interests were not politically opposed, but each formed a body of men divided from one another only by the natural differences of political purpose for which they were formed. Both classes agreed in the utility of a monarchical head over three united states, at that time without a common legislation, and they retained the monarchy, while they in some measure restricted the royal privileges. The monarchy, on its side, whilst it received the crown from the parliament, renounced the fable of its divine origin, which had lent it a peculiar sanctity ; the position of the king, lords, and commons, rather rests on the basis of an acquired and conditional, though acknowledged right, and each sees in the right of the others a confirmation of his own. In this they remained faithful to the character of those times, when revolutions were only undertaken in defence of injured, or to restore ancient rights. The well-balanced influence of these powers of the state, indeed the manly and political character of those who hold the administration, depends upon the equality of their rights ; their different vocations act as a safeguard against political degeneration, which (as Aristotle observes) is produced by appropriating the offices of state to serve the purposes of individuals or of a class. It is in that "mixed constitution" that the different classes of the people appear side by side, each possessed of peculiar privileges, while the elements are so well amalgamated, that history stands up and points to this state as her master-work. It is the constitutional form of state in its most perfect and natural development, where the constitution has continued through all ages, where no essential has been lost in the material of its history, where the old has, by a wonderful adjustment, been adapted to the wants of the new, and the experience of a mature political science been added. Therefore, while one discovers in it the perfection of the old Anglo-Saxon, another sees the completion of the class, constitution of the middle ages. The separation into corporate bodies is still retained in the habits of life, in society, as well as in the constitution ; the different classes and powers of the state, with their respective interests, resemble great blocks of freestone, of which the edifice of the state is constructed with extraordinary solidity. It can scarcely be said which of them in particular gives it its character, form, and name. If we consider the unity of the

government, the royal veto, the power and might which it lends in the relations with foreign powers, we feel as if the state were monarchical. If we view the church, which, with a royal pope at its head, endeavours to effect a *national* unanimity in matters of faith, as Catholicism endeavours to effect *general* unanimity, we stumble on the theocratic element. If we survey the whole public spirit, the conservative nature of its policy, the character of those to whom the administration is intrusted, the privileges, customs, and habits of life of the representatives of the people, the English state appears essentially aristocratic. If we reflect that the consent of the commons is required for their own taxation, the chief influence seems to reside in the community at large; and if we further examine the institutions and relations of society in detail, the activity and independence of private life, the decentralization of the administration, self-government, the absence of bureaucracy, the entire freedom of person and property, the system of the land defences, the rights of meeting and of the press, everything seems to be democratic. It is also democratic that the chief power should reside in the legislature, and that the people, by granting the crown through its parliament, should assert its own sovereignty. Yet no people speak less of their sovereign power than the English, or have a more genuine feeling for the monarchy. No state depends more upon the recollections of the past, and no people dwell more on aristocratic conservatism. It is the Englishman's boast that his constitution is open to all progress, and is plastic to the influence of every great view, every experience, and every demand of necessity. No one is more jealous than the Englishman of the security of his person and property from the usurpations of the state, and yet there is no state of modern times more constructed on the model of antiquity, where the individual lived for the state, and sacrificed to it his personal will and private interests. This gives an exclusive, narrow, self-interested, and strictly national character to the English nation; and yet no people have proved themselves more capable of showing regard and forbearance towards foreign nations, even in defeat. These reconciled contradictions, this variety in unity, and harmonized combination of parts, a consequence of the happy adaptation of the external institutions of the state to the character of the people,

is the peculiar pride of the English constitution, the source of its power, the pledge of its freedom. This compound nature is also the cause why it is theoretically difficult to comprehend and to do justice to this state and its institutions, and why practically they have remained without an exact likeness in spite of many copies. For this constitution is not fitted to be a formulary for any other ; it may rather serve as a lesson to a people who in an equally patriotic spirit, and desirous of making the same use of old and new institutions, might form one adapted to *their* nature and peculiar character, which might rival the English most in excellence, when it resembled it least in form.

The English democracy had already in the time of the first Stuarts begun to turn their attention towards emigration, in the hope that on the free soil of America, unperplexed by monarchical and aristocratic privileges, habits, and power, they might raise the edifice of a new state and a new church, in their own simple style. Shortly after Spain had lost her influence in Europe by her successive defeats in her wars with Germany, the Netherlands, and England, the Teutonic races established themselves in North America, with the express purpose not to permit Spain and the Catholic church to reign sole possessors of the New World. The singular contrast of the Teutonic and Romanic habits and character was never presented in so striking a point of view, as on the theatre of the new life which unfolded itself here. Over the wide tracts of country colonized by Spaniards and Portuguese, the whole spirit of the middle ages lay encamped, in all its original barbarity and its degradation to mankind. Spanish despotism, with the narrow spirit of its religion, had been transferred here ; a ready-made hierarchy, with all its external pomp and internal rudeness, and in its train a feudal aristocracy, bent on conquest, covetous, and inhuman. A stop was put to all mercantile industry and mental activity, and conformity in church and state, in which the Indian and the negro were alike included, spread over this part of the New World ; whereas, from the early part of the seventeenth century, emigrants, chiefly from the Teutonic races, Germans, Dutch, Swedes, and Englishmen, principally of the Saxon race, were brought together in the north. They were for the most part Protestants, and of the strictest morality. The greater

number were Puritans and Quakers. No Viceroy with monarchical institutions was admitted here; the republican spirit on the contrary prevailed among the colonists, and not only among those who had emigrated without a grant from the king, but even those who came provided with charters and accompanied by governors. The hierarchy never reached this land; the English noble, the Flemish patrician, only made feeble and short-lived efforts to transplant their institutions here; they had left their feudal usages and mortmain, and all the habits of the middle ages, behind them; the new era, with its rapid intellectual growth, with its commercial industry, and with equality of rights, sprang into existence! Those circumstances in a nation's life which in other countries develop themselves in the course of many centuries, the chase, pastoral occupation, agriculture, and commerce, all existed at one and the same time here, from the period of the American Independence. The emigrants had too much of the reserved and exclusive spirit of German Protestants to form connexion with the Indians, whom they regarded as scarcely human, but they were also conscientious enough to purchase the land from the aboriginals, which was available for culture; unlike the nations in the south, who had accepted the right of possession as a grant from the Pope. In striking contrast with the one great dominion of Spanish America, a varied world, composed of numerous petty states, grew up here; and this diversity in the conditions of South and North America was in singular agreement with the conditions of both these continents before the emigration from Europe. The Spaniards left their vast domains at home, and found great Indian states already established in Mexico and Peru; it was therefore absolutely necessary that they should plant an extensive colonial state to maintain their own authority. The English in the north, who came over in separate bands, found petty tribes of Indians scattered over the country, unconnected with each other, weak in numbers and in power. They were therefore entirely at liberty, following their Teutonic bent, to keep themselves apart in small and varied communities. Thus a Theocracy after the pattern of Geneva was formed in Massachusetts; in Maryland a feudal principedom; in Carolina a government consisting of eight lordships with a great landed aristocracy; in Virginia an English province with high-

church institutions; in Rhode Island and Connecticut a democracy; in Pennsylvania a cosmopolitan Quaker republic, which from its commencement offered an asylum to the world; and in New Amsterdam (New York) a Flemish town with a municipality. In their general history the states followed the Star of England. Unobserved in the beginning, they formed their constitutions freely according to the demands of the times. In the era of the English Republic the spirit of democracy planted itself securely; under the Restoration it suffered much injury and danger in its charters, liberties, self-government, and property. After 1688 each separate state returned to its previous institutions. Throughout all these first varying fortunes of the colonies it may be remarked that freedom of action and democratic development continued to prosper, which can only be attributed to this cause—that those institutions which impede the progress of state and church, viz. the hierarchy and the aristocracy, did not reach them from Europe, and that they prospered exactly in proportion as the remaining institution, viz. monarchy, found no occasion or opportunity to make them sensible of its existence. That the republican spirit of the colonists only submitted to this rule while the power was wanting to assert their independence, was perceived by all wise men from the beginning of the eighteenth century. Democracy, which was rooted in the principles of the earliest emigrants, was, after a long struggle, by that time firmly established. For its sake, the Puritans had fled from the tyranny in church and state in Europe; they came to America, resolved not to allow the mother country to lay claim to the possessions they had paid for, on the plea of a right derived from the discovery, though they also came with the intention of maintaining in all uprightness the general connexion with England, following the example of the Greek colonies; but they were determined to oppose every interference in their government, all dictation on matters of religion, every attempt at legislation from a parliament across the ocean to which they could send no delegates, or at jurisdiction from a distant authority. In 1646 Massachusetts regarded her relations with England in the same light as the Hanseatic towns did theirs to the German empire; and this fundamental principle of independence, increased more and more with the numbers and power of the

colonists. The same spirit of democracy, which grew so rapidly in the state, entered also into the affairs of the church, where however it moved more slowly and on a more troubled way. For the former case was decided by necessity, but the latter depended on how far men were fitted by education for free government in religious matters. In some few states, such as Carolina, New York, and Maryland, under the philanthropic Lord Baltimore, all religions were tolerated from the beginning, although they were not granted equal privileges. In Virginia conformity was required to the views of the high-church party; but even amidst the Puritans of Massachussetts, Calvinistic intolerance excluded every other creed from the state, and persecuted Anabaptists and Quakers by exile and death. It was on this very subject that their minister (Robinson) solemnly exhorted the pilgrims who went forth on their journey to escape from persecution at home, when he reminded them of the purely democratic principles of the Protestant religion, and bade them not linger behind with Calvin and Luther, who, great as they were, could not discern all the ways of God, but accept any additional light which was presented to them, and consider it as an established principle of their church, that it was open to receive every truth. Roger Williams, in accordance with this principle, urged an entire liberty of conscience in Massachussetts, and a separation of the church from all matters appertaining to the state. But he was obliged to fly from the country, and in 1636 he founded a small new society in Rhode Island, upon the principles of entire liberty of conscience, and the uncontrolled power of the majority in secular concerns, which became also the constitution of Connecticut. The theories of freedom in church and state, taught in the schools of philosophy in Europe, were here brought into practice in the government of a small community. It was prophesied that the democratic attempts to obtain universal suffrage, a general elective franchise, annual parliaments, entire religious freedom, and the Miltonian right of schism, would be of short duration. But these institutions have not only maintained themselves here, but have spread from these petty states over the whole union. They superseded the aristocratic commencements of Carolina and of New York, the high-church party in Virginia, the Theocracy in Massachussetts, and the monarchy through-

out America; they have given laws to one quarter of the globe, and, dreaded for their moral influence, they stand in the background of every democratic struggle in Europe.

We shall in some future place treat of the history of the separation of the English colonies in connexion with another series of events, and only here, by a few touches, contrast the character of their constitution (the growth of a later age) with that of England, in order to take a general survey of the progress of freedom in all the purely Teutonic states.

The purely Saxon, purely democratic constitution of the United States has become the precise antithesis to the Saxon Roman constitution of England. The Puritans, in their first emigration, brought with them, more or less defined, the simple sketch of the edifice of their constitution, and carried it more or less into practice. The last finish, after the declaration of independence, was only the fulfilment of the first thought. No antiquity, no tradition, no history and experience prescribed a plan or fettered them to extant materials. Aristocracy and the hierarchy were left behind in Europe; the royal and parliamentary government of England was rejected. The instincts of simple nature, or reason in its simplest consequence, apart from all existing state organizations, led to the completion of the new edifice in the rising state, and they ventured, though with admirable prudence, on the great trial of extending it over an immense region, in spite of the prophecies which, in their small beginnings, promised them only a temporary success. It was not necessary to consider here how different classes might be brought into relationship with one another, and how all might enjoy equal rights. The Americans in the first outbreak of their revolution, indeed, appealed to their charters and self-created institutions, and endeavoured to defend them as conceded rights; but at the separation they ceased to look for justification of their rebellion: for should they still urge their claims to existing relations, they must begin by an acknowledgment of the chief relation to the mother country, which they were on the point of exchanging for independence. They therefore scorned to make a demand for rights and freedom which they claimed as natural and universal, and acted thus as much in conformity with the earliest principles of Protestantism, as with those of the latest theories which France had sent into the world a

short time before the rebellion of the colonies. The American Declaration of Rights in 1776 commenced with an acknowledgment of the natural rights of man, of which no form of government can deprive him; of his freedom and independence, his claim to the enjoyment of life and liberty, of the means for the acquisition of property and wealth, and for the attainment of fortune and security. The people were entitled to change or depose any government which should deny these universal rights of man; by which clause they justified the separation. By the introduction of universal suffrage, they pronounced the great democratic maxim, that the government is the legal expression of the people's will. This did not produce a mixed constitution, composed of several parts united into one, as in England, but a single symmetrical form of state of the utmost simplicity. The boast of the American constitution is, not the skilful administration of many different elements, but the perfect fulfilment of a logical sequence, deduced from one single principle—*freedom*, or the right to pay submission to nothing but law; and *equality*, the duty of all alike to obey one and the same law. There was therefore no necessity to level ranks, power, pretensions, influence, or rights, as there only existed one society and one class, from which all particular rights and privileges were abolished. Power, which in the hands of the few has often led to arbitrary rule, and in the hands of the many to privileges, was equally distributed as the right of all; for one right ensures one common practice. The rich adopted the tone of the middle class, to which the poor aspired, and from whose customs and for whose convenience the law is actually made. Old and new institutions had not here to be reconciled with one another in the spirit of progressive conservatism, for everything in this state of the future is new, everything is already in progress, and built upon innovations. We are not presented with the image of an ancient incorporated state, of a strict exclusive nationality, but of a society originating from all parts of the world, who are ready to receive any within their pale, capable of adapting their form of government to any people who might wish to join their confederation, citizens of the world; not one great nation, but a federal union in which each separate state strives to obtain the sovereign power, while within them again, individuals claim the

utmost independence of the government. The feeling of individuality, the characteristic feature of modern times and of Protestantism, has here maintained its rights. The state exists more for the individual, than the individual for the state. The institutions of government are subordinate to the freedom of the governed; the independence of the man is more important than the duties of the citizen. The widest field upon which the claims of man and the claims of the state have contended, and yet always contend, the church, is here entirely withdrawn from the state; and nothing remains as a ground on which to legislate, and on which the government and the will of the individual can dispute, but general principles. The entire picture of a new state, such as had never before been seen, lies now unrolled before us, after an interval of seventy years. The states of the middle ages, built on corporations, great family connexions, on large communities, have yielded before a state which appears resting on a quicksand, where all the earlier social compacts, guilds, churches, nobles, military, &c., are dispersed, and where even the tie of family is loosened. The one bond of the state exists, beside a scattered multitude, who, as far as lies in their power, pursue singly the objects they have in view, or, should this not suffice for their attainment, form independent connexions. Experience teaches us the same rule may be applied to the edifice of the state which has been discovered to apply to all architecture; a rule which maintains that it is a prejudice to suppose a foundation on sand, less strong than that upon a rock. This new state, by its astonishing achievements in fortune and power, has suddenly surpassed all others, and the boldest political adventurers have succeeded, and mocked at all sceptics. The government of the people, even when scattered over immeasurable tracts of country, has shown itself to be compatible with order and prosperity; the progressive constitution with the maintenance of old confirmed usages; the free exercise of religion with piety; the absence of military power with a warlike spirit; the most enormous increase of a population thrown together by chance with patriotism rooted in freedom; the administration and government through officials and representatives, chosen by and from among the poor, with order and economy in the household. This prosperity, combined with a simpli-

city in the constitution which lays it open to the comprehension of the plainest understanding, has made this state and this constitution a model, which the most enlightened men as well as the discontented, and the lovers of freedom in all nations, strive to imitate. Their Declaration of Rights, in 1776, has become the creed of liberalism throughout the world.

SECTION IV.

ROMANIC NATIONS.

The Romanic States join in the struggle for freedom. — France, her position towards the purely Teutonic and Romanic nations. — Political effect of the Reformation in France. — Henry IV. — Absolutism in France. — Louis XIV. — Thirst for aggrandizement of Louis XIV. — William of Orange. — Altered character of Policy and Administration since the increase of the Colonies. — Spanish Colonization. — French attempts at Colonization. — Separation of the English Colonies in America by the assistance of France. — French Literature under Louis XIV. — New principles of Administration. — New theories of the Political and Social Constitution. — Universality of the new principles of Liberty exhibited in French Theory and American Practice. — Re-action of the American Revolution upon Europe. — The French Revolution. — Insecurity of the new French Constitution. — Effect of the French Revolution on foreign nations. — Wars of Freedom. — Re-action.

FROM the time when a mixed constitution was established in England, and afterwards, when in consequence of the Declaration of Independence by the colonies a purely republican constitution was perfected in the United States, (the keystone and model of the development of a Teutonic people,) both began to exercise an influence across the sea upon the European continent, and act from the Teutonic upon the Romanic races. As soon, however, as the period arrived when the English colonies prepared for separation from the mother country, several new phenomena in history made their appearance, which interrupted, magnified, and still further involved the hitherto simple course of affairs. We have as yet entirely confined ourselves to the development of Protestantism, and to that only as it acted on the Teutonic races, to whom it peculiarly belonged.—It governed and gave a form to their literature, politics, and life. Peace and war had hitherto been carried on only with relation to religious subjects. Even where the question was one which concerned the temporal interests of nations, when it was

ostensibly a struggle for power between hostile states, yet religion was deeply involved in them, and by no means served only as a pretext. The contending parties were themselves the earnest champions of the opposite creeds. But this unvaried position of the European people towards one another, this single subject which has occupied history, is changed in those wars which were occasioned by, and carried on after, the independence of the English colonies in America. The interests of commerce took the place of those of religion; and dictated the laws and policy of states, settled the occasions of war and revolutions, and prescribed the articles of amnesties and treaties of peace. Religion also no longer lay at the foundation of the struggles for independence in America, but political principles, which, though having their source in Protestant ideas, were afterwards borrowed from abstract philosophical theories, and proclaimed the advent of a new agent in politics, the influence of science and literature; and further, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, England, who had hitherto been the champion of the cause of freedom, was justly accused of oppression and abuse of power, and those Romanic nations which had always laboured for the subjection of the people, now fought on the side of the American rebels. This altered position of nations, these new and animating forces in the history of the world, are the first signs that the bitter hostility caused by difference in religious creeds, and the political principles which had exclusively belonged to either division of the great European people, had lost their power. The immediate consequence was, that, as soon as the independence of America had been secured, the great movement for freedom passed from thence over to France, and tore down religious bigotry and despotism in the greatest among Romanic nations. To take a fuller survey of both these events consecutively, we shall find it necessary to call to mind the history of France, upon which, as yet, we have only occasionally touched.

During the wars of Spain with the Teutonic nations, and of Catholicism with Protestantism, France had ever found herself, if not exactly in a central position, yet in a state of oscillation between the two opposite directions, which led to the hostility of the north and south. It seemed as if it were her vocation to prevent a constant preponderance of either party,

or as if the Teutonic and Gallic-Romanic elements of the nation alternately struggled for precedence. She found herself forced to repress the overgrown power of Spain, in which the Roman See felt called upon to assist, although it could only be effected by a league with Protestant states; but when England by this alliance began to grow into a dangerous neighbour, France considered herself bound to return to her connexion with the Catholic powers. When Charles V. drove the French out of Italy, the House of Valois united with the Landgrave Philip and Maurice of Saxony against Spain; in the year 1569 she joined Spain in an alliance against England, and three years later allied herself with England against Spain. Henry IV. contrived to keep on good terms with both the Protestant and Catholic powers. These oscillations recommenced under Richelieu, and, while in league with England against Spain, he laid schemes with Spain and the pope for an attack on England, and at the same time formed an alliance with Sweden against Spain and Austria. By this shifting policy France had been frequently saved from Protestantism, viz. in the time of Maurice of Saxony, and during the period of the successes of Gustavus Adolphus, when, just after she had made the most dangerous attack on the liberty of other nations, she saw her own existence threatened. But Protestantism was annihilated under Louis XIV., when it had really ceased to be dangerous, and was therefore openly exercised. In this, as in many instances, France, whenever she was ranged on the side of Spain, or followed in the path of Spanish policy, has been prejudicial to freedom, but when on the side of Protestantism and allied with England has been as beneficial to the cause; and not less so in the times of Henry IV. than in those of Louis Philippe. This perpetual vacillation could neither produce constancy in the political and religious character of the people, nor of their government. Throughout the entire history of France, the strangest discords occur in the principles of the government, in the different bodies of the state, in parties, and literature. Absolutism had its democratic freaks, and democracy its despotic propensities. Literature oscillated betwixt heathenish free-thinking and priestly bigotry. Poets praised republican virtues out of servile mouths; parliaments balanced between cringing flattery and faction. The Sorbonne preached

to-day the divine right of princes, and to-morrow the sovereignty of the people. The Jesuits taught the principles of democracy in the conduct of the state, and despotism in that of the church ; and this game of alternate extremes in either direction, may be remarked in all the relations of France up to the present day.

Not the least remarkable feature in these vacillations is the never-failing connexion between Protestantism and the efforts to obtain a partition of the state with the acknowledgment of their separate claims, and the tendency of Catholicism towards centralization and towards extension of the boundaries of the nation. In 1562-65, when the Roman legate saw France as near apostacy to Protestantism as north Germany, the land itself approached as nearly to German subdivisions. Afterwards, when for a short time she hesitated between the Catholic and Protestant faiths under Henry IV. (who himself belonged to both creeds), this great prince began to consider how he might for ever put an end to the disputes of the churches, and to the scheme of universal dominion in Europe entertained by Spain and Austria. When, in a later age, Louis XIV. trod in the footsteps of Spain, he annihilated the Protestant religion. Again, during the Revolution, while France mocked at all religion, she preached the brotherhood of nations, and drew a girdle of little confederated republics round herself. From this, she attempted once more the scheme of universal dominion with her return to the Catholic faith.—It is thus proved that a universal empire can never dispense with the papacy, and Napoleon, on his way to this object, knew that he, no more than Charles V., could have dared to extend a hand to Protestantism, however he might have professed the contrary.

On the other hand, the Protestant Teutonic nations have not alone contended everywhere against the overgrown territorial power of any people, but the attempt to achieve one great universal empire has never been seriously entertained by them. The Roman empire was an idea introduced from abroad into Germany, and never excited the sympathy of the people. Even the semi-German-Austrian nation never dreamt of one universal monarchy. Prussia has only spared the independence of her provinces too much. The three Scandinavian kingdoms have never submitted to be united, though they

seem born to it, by situation, circumstances, and origin. The great English nation itself is composed of three small states, which in their commencement were but thinly populated, and the legalized union with Scotland and Ireland only took place in times of danger from abroad (1707, 1800). Great as England has become by her colonies, she has never, like Spain, imposed on them conformity to the state, nor has she actually received from them an accession of power, since they have been more expense than profit to her, and their occupation by the military has weakened rather than strengthened the mother country. But even the home policy of England is so organized that she could never become a conquering state; her power is not derived from the policy of a dynasty, but from the active industry of her inhabitants, which is advanced by peace, but seldom by war. The same may be remarked of the constitution and resources of the United States. A government formed after one standard—power concentrated in one hand—has neither suited the Teutonic people nor the genius of the Protestant religion. The type of their government has rather been, from the beginning of history to this day, a confederation of people and states, such as those of Germany and Switzerland, the Hanseatic League, the Netherlands and America, where, although their centralized government might perhaps be somewhat disjointed, no maturer political experience or theory could draw it closer together. The propensity to divide into separate bodies made it a necessary condition of the state and church to separate into communities, everywhere the sign of a higher degree of cultivation, since in Nature herself all great uniform spaces and large masses are divested of higher organization. Thus France was on the eve of receiving the new evangelical doctrine, whilst she was at that very time threatened with being infected by the German propensity for separation, and with being subdivided into petty provincial governments. It seemed that her unity could not be maintained without the sacrifice of Protestantism, as Protestantism could not exist in Germany without the sacrifice of unity. Throughout the whole religious wars of France may be traced the scheme of the Protestant nobles to erect independent princedoms for themselves. The Prince of Condé had Anjou and Poitou in view; the Duke of Bouillon, Périgord and Limousin; the

Count of Soissons (the Protestant leader of the south), other parts of the kingdom. Bouillon proposed nothing less than to convert France into a federative republic, under the protection of the Elector Palatine, and to govern the separate provinces by vicegerents from among the Protestant nobles. This scheme played into the hands of Spain, and promoted the success of her proverbial intrigues to disarm the power of France. Meantime, the chief of the League laid baits to entrap the duke of Savoy by the gift of Provence, and the duke of Nemours by assigning the Lyonnois to him, while Mayenne himself strove for a restoration of the independent duchy of Burgundy. If the French nobles had then, as in former days, been supported by vast territories and a train of dependents, or had been like the German princes, France must have accepted the same political form as Germany.

Henry IV. and his minister Sully considered it to be their vocation to guard France from being thus divided into many petty states, surrounded as she was, on either side, by kingdoms whose unity was so dangerous to her existence, as the pontifical church and the Spanish dominions; and they were also determined to throw insurmountable difficulties for ever in the way of the preposterous claims of the papacy, and of the alarming power of Austria; and at once to put an end to every future attempt at a universal monarchy or religion. They had, in a coalition with Elizabeth and with James I. of England, laid the great scheme by which this end might be accomplished. Europe was to be formed into a general confederation, whose peace might be maintained by the arbitration of an Amphyction, and in which the three principal creeds of Christendom should be equally tolerated, and the three principal forms of state be admitted. The Austrian house was to be restricted to Spain, and lose its possessions in Italy and the Netherlands, as well as the empire; the nations of Europe were to be divided into five hereditary monarchies, five electoral kingdoms, and four great republics (Switzerland, Belgium, Italy, Venice), and thus the power of Spain be broken. France and England were resolved to show an example of moderation, and only stipulate for few advantages to themselves. But the central states were to be gained by satisfying their self-interested views, and by important concessions of territorial aggrandizement. Could

this scheme have been realized, Germany would have been spared the thirty years war, and half the world the great re-action of the seventeenth century, which we have already described. Absolutism would have proudly proclaimed, by a work which would have embraced all Europe, its vocation to train the world to freedom and moral perfection. But the affairs of the world have been proved not to follow in the course of such ideal paths. This scheme was as much a chimæra as that of the Holy Alliance and the democratic project of a republic of the world. Apart from the mistaken notion that accession of territory would extinguish rather than awaken the ambition of the central states, and that princes as powerful and virtuous as Elizabeth and Henry IV. were always to be found to watch over the confederation, it was a plan so entirely opposed to the inclinations of all common men, that even in Henry's council of state there was none except Sully, to whom it could even be mentioned without risk. It disappeared therefore with the death of Henry, and France from that time followed a directly opposite course. She allowed herself to be robbed of the Protestant faith which Henry IV. had proposed to protect throughout the world, and at the same time she approached nearer to Spanish absolutism and the desire for an extension of power, which evils he had been desirous of arresting at their very source.

First, as relates to Absolutism. For a considerable period everything had tended to prepare France for a greater development of monarchical power than even was exercised in Spain under Philip II. During the fortunate era of the dynasty of the House of Capet, the systematic extension of the crown lands, suggested a line of policy to the monarch prejudicial to the feudal nobility, and from the eleventh century determined the course of the state towards unity, as in Germany it had led towards partition. This direction was then so decided, that, during the unhappy rule of the House of Valois, its course could neither be diverted by the ambitious schemes of powerful vassals, nor by party dissensions, nor by foreign influence during the English invasions, nor by the Huguenot wars. On the contrary, the very danger which had menaced the unity of the state made it the more precious, and the power of the monarch, for whom this unity seems chiefly to have been lent, received an addi-

tional lustre. The greatest princes of France have always laboured to stretch the limits of their power to the utmost extent: thus, the four successive kings, from Louis XI. to Francis I., ever aimed at the same end, and acquired respect and authority, if, during that unfortunate period, they failed in obtaining tranquillity and happiness. The Bourbons followed this policy with a greater chance of success, because just before they came to the throne, the unity of the state had been endangered—a circumstance which made it improbable that any regular and steady resistance would be offered to their unlimited power. There was no well-ordered development of a parliamentary constitution—no co-operation of the privileged classes for the general interests of the country—the laws prescribed no limits to the royal authority, as in England. If the States-General were occasionally summoned, they presented the unsatisfactory spectacle of three institutions, each endeavouring to defraud the other; two always rejecting the propositions of the third, and each urging their own claims, not for the use of the privileges appertaining to their body, but for their abuse, for the profit of individuals belonging to it. The tribunals of justice endeavoured to appropriate a part of the legislative and executive authority. Those of Paris, in particular, acted as if they had been a part of the legislature, and, while they never strove to gain the authority which was legally their own, often conducted themselves with revolutionary violence. This usurped, illegal power became the motive for every other kind of unruly ambition. Even Sully, embittered by his experience of representative institutions, turned from them with disgust, though he acknowledged the utility and reasonableness of their consent being required for taxation; and the people looked on with indifference at their disappearance. The mild Henry IV. resisted the Parisian parliament with the utmost determination, and gave his two following successors an example which was not lost upon them. Thus, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, there was no longer a power in France which could have disputed the absolutism of the king, except the religious parties and a few ambitious nobles; and their fall excited little sympathy, as they had at one time introduced the Spaniards into the country, and at another, foreign Protestants. Henry IV. spared

while he repressed them—Richelieu crushed them by force. According to the saying of Cardinal de Retz, he made a capital out of every evil ambition and folly of the parties in France, out of the weakness of the German empire, and out of the incapacity of Spain; all of which he applied to advance the despotic power of the sovereign. He was an absolutist, as described by Macchiavelli, whose selfish views were subordinate to the interests of the state, whose cruelty was atoned for by his imparting a greater power to it abroad than it had ever before possessed; and whose intrigues, because they were followed up with reckless determination, were always crowned with success.

Richelieu had pioneered the way for the despotism of Louis XIV. If the minister was excited to severity in his government by the resistance of incompatible elements, the same difficulties encountered Louis XIV., and in a manner which touched him more personally. Immediately after the death of Richelieu and Louis XIII. the effects of the English revolution began to be felt in France. The Parisian parliament, in imitation of the English, tried to play the part of the representatives of the people; and the people, with a few restless nobles, united in the wars of the Fronde during the minority of Louis XIV. The queen-regent was upon the eve of flight; for a time it seemed as if the French royal family had the same fate before them as that which had driven the English, as fugitives and in distress, to Paris. Growing up under these circumstances, with the example of the execution of the English king and the power of the English republic before him, Louis must have looked back to the system of Richelieu for a precedent by which to guide his own conduct. That which, however, must have left on him the strongest impression was his experience of the weakness of this first and last act of resistance. There was none of the fiery party-zeal of former days in these wars of the Fronde—none of the excitement of a great religious, political, or even corporate interest; for what must that revolution have been in which an intriguer, like the Coadjutor of Paris, was the first tribune of the people? The whole affair was a game of petty court intrigues against a minister, in which only a small number of the great nobles took an active interest; in which the Protestants were left entirely out of the question; in which even the distinguished

generals, who afterwards proved themselves so able under the guidance of Louis XIV., played but sorry parts. It was as if every member of the nation refused its services to the exhausted body, and that the head *must* act for all. Under the government of Louis XIV., and during the immense changes which took place in the state, France first became sensible of the consequences of the overthrow of old feudal institutions. An end was put to the innumerable acts of tyranny upon the domains of the nobles, in which neither men nor property had been respected, both of which acquired now a new value; the middle class, both in bearing and manners, placed themselves on an equal footing with their superiors; the external distinctions of rank and occupation ceased; honour was acknowledged as due to intellectual merit as much as to birth, to art and science as much as to the practice of arms. The produce of the industry of the working classes was protected, wealth was secured by order and tranquillity, and the opportunity was offered for greater enterprise and more certain gain. As the government lent its great resources to aid this new activity of the nation, and colonization, navigation, and the political influence of agriculture, commerce, and industry created new powers in the state, it was impossible but that all should be convinced that the despotism of one was more conducive to the interest of the country, than the arbitrary rule of the many. Who would not have overlooked a few oppressive laws, the burden of taxation, and faults of administration, for the sake of the general welfare? The separate interests of corporate bodies were sunk in the common interest. The desire which had been formerly expressed for communities in the state yielded before the proud feeling of a united nation. The new phenomenon was all the more dazzling as the example was given in so great a body of people, that wheresoever it led, it had only to direct its whole energies and powers to one aim in order to ensure success. Thus far absolutism showed itself superior to the oligarchy of the middle ages. This superiority was lost when Louis fell into the very error which makes all oligarchies so hated and so pernicious, of sacrificing the interests of the state to his own, and, puffed up by his royal omnipotence, he confided in his unaided strength. When his mistresses had made a bigot of him, and he had driven the Protestants from the land—when, in place of his old

and tried ministers and generals, he had set up the insignificant creatures of his favour and the convenient tools of his will, the greatness of France sank more rapidly than it had risen, and far more terrible disorders hung over the future of the nation than those which the Stuarts, by a similar conduct, had entailed on England.

If the internal exhaustion of France presented an opportunity to bring royal absolutism to perfection, the exhaustion of almost all neighbouring and distant lands tempted the ambition of France into the same path from which she had formerly struggled to turn Spain and Austria. About the time of the accession of Louis a general relapse into weakness pervaded all the nations of the south of Europe. The kingdoms out of which the movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had proceeded sank one after the other into equal insignificance. The internal decline of Spain began in the midst of her external greatness; the warlike power of the Moslem under Suleiman the Great was suddenly destroyed in 1566, and Austria fell back from her aggressive attitude during the thirty years war, to one of sullen defence. Among the Teutonic nations, a political apathy had fallen on Switzerland and Germany, and during the seventeenth century England and the Netherlands alone remained on the field against France; during the eighteenth, only England was opposed to her, and these two nations stood as the jealous representatives of the Teutonic and Romanic elements, whose hostility had long prejudiced the cause of freedom. France was only forced into a war with Spain, who had never ceased to harass her. Charles V. tried to injure her by war; Philip II. endeavoured to obtain her for himself, by making use of the disturbances of the League; and his successors had the same end in view in their feeble intrigues. Every restless spirit in France found encouragement in Spain, and every insurrection found support. Even under Richelieu, Orleans and Bouillon, when determined on rebellion, concluded formal treaties with Spain, who armed herself to assist the discontented spirits in the wars of the Fronde. Austria, on her part, pursued the same hostile policy. France was so hemmed in by both nations, that she had scarcely an outlet left her except by sea, and in every war she had to defend an enormous frontier. Before and after the thirty years war, at Veltlin and at Man-

tua, Spain and Austria united in hostile intentions towards France. Necessity compelled her to rid herself of these troublesome foes; the miscalculation of their resources, an error of which even Charles V. had often been guilty, soon placed France on the aggressive side; their increasing debility at last transferred to her the part they had hitherto played. Richelieu had requited the rebellion in France excited by Spain, by carrying it into Spain herself, and assisting Portugal to separate from her. He prolonged the war in Germany, in order that it might alternately weaken the Protestants and Catholics, and give time for the growth of those advantages in France which, when fully ripe, Mazarin gathered in the peace of Westphalia. Louis XIV. played the same game in England, where he alternately supported the Protestant rebels, and the government, and made the Stuarts dependent upon him. In one continued course of good fortune and insolence Louis succeeded so far in England, that he bought her king from her, and contrived to purchase of him so important a place as Dunkirk: he succeeded in seizing from Spain a part of Flanders and Franche Comté with some appearance of right, and later on took possession of Luxembourg without even such a pretence: he attacked Holland in 1672, and nearly conquered her, without even assigning a pretext for the war; and in Germany (1678-1684), in the time of the so-called Reunion, he inquired of the judges in the French tribunals how much belonged to Germany before she had added new territory by the peace of Westphalia, and, according to their decisions, seized upon the land belonging to various princes and countries. Long before he had met with such success, Sweden (in the peace of Westphalia) had warned Austria that Spain's schemes of universal empire had been transferred to France; Mazarin had already conceived the idea of uniting the Spanish Netherlands to France, and of endeavouring to effect a junction between France and Spain. This idea seemed to be fulfilled in later times, when the will of Charles II. called the grandson of Louis (Anjou) to the Spanish throne. By a stroke of the pen, yielded to the fear of the power of Louis, the ancient tie between Austria and Spain was rent asunder, and a new one knit with France. Another scheme of universal dominion supplied the place of the former. That both crowns should rest on one

head would never have been tolerated, but the House of Austria had already demonstrated what could be effected by extending the family connexions of an ambitious dynasty; Louis XIV. had expressly enjoined on Anjou, as Napoleon afterwards on his relations, never to forget that he was a Frenchman and an autocrat. But at that period France had begun to plant colonies in North America, which in a semi-circular form along the banks of the Mississippi enclosed the English colonies from Canada to Louisiana. How vast would the possessions of France have been, had the Spanish South American colonies fallen into the hands of the Bourbons, and both kingdoms been guided by one head in politics and religion! France had become completely Spanish in matters of religion. Louis XIV., in the consciousness of power, had dared that which Richelieu had never attempted, and which was even disapproved of by the Pontifical See. He had already, in 1672, commanded the restoration of the Catholic faith in the Netherlands, and in 1685 he recalled the Edict of Nantes, drove half a million of industrious inhabitants out of the country, and converted the remainder by force of arms. It was then that, blinded by zeal, he persuaded James II. to restore Catholicism in England. Could this attempt have succeeded, what a different aspect would history have presented, as the same re-action would have infallibly taken place in Holland, and the French Jesuits, instead of the Anglo-Saxon Puritans, would have been the religious guides of the American colonies!

But the Teutonic people of the north-western part of Europe, who had formerly undermined the designs of the Spaniards, were now once more called upon to shake the fabric of universal dominion which the French nation threatened. One alone, one truly great man was destined to cross the schemes of this one Louis, who bore the surname of the Great. William of Orange frustrated him (1672-78), by a desperate resistance, in his almost completed conquest of the Republic of the Netherlands. He united with and armed the whole of Europe in the League of Augsburg (1687) against Louis's insatiable thirst for conquest, to gratify which he had, after the treaty of Nimeguen, betrayed all the countries round him. In 1688, William destroyed the danger of the alliance between Louis and the Stuarts, by consenting

to his own elevation to the English throne, in the place of his father-in-law. Finally, he armed England and Austria in the war of the Spanish succession against France. His whole life is one great struggle for the balance of power in the states of Europe, and he bequeathed the task to England—for which the German empire was too divided, and Holland too weak—to watch over France for the tranquillity of Europe, a task which in the time of the French revolution she had to summon all her strength to fulfil. The usurpations of Catholicism were once more checked by the exclusive nature of the Protestant church in England; the overpowering attraction and influence of French despotism over all the governments of Europe was met by the stability of the English constitution, and, under its care, the blossom which had withered in France flourished and endured. The despotic power of the monarch found an edifice here built on a very different foundation, and the ambition for territorial aggrandisement was encountered by a power of an entirely new kind.

The prosperity of the colonies of the New World had, about the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, caused an alteration in the condition of those states from which they had proceeded. Navigation was carried on far more extensively, and received great improvements; commerce by sea seemed to promise to become more lucrative than that by land; the spirit of adventure had commenced the work which was continued by calculating industry; the connexion of the two hemispheres multiplied the wants as well as the means of satisfying them, increased the materials for industry, promoted their diffusion and their happy results. Vast commercial relations were established to equalize demand and supply, superfluity and want. Industry and trade became sources of wealth to the middle class, and provided a stimulus for individual exertion such as had never before been known. They also became the sources of the nation's wealth, and therefore the first objects to be considered in politics and government. And this the more, since, by the altered condition of the world, the growth of the states, and the complicated relations of all the affairs of life, the resources which formerly had provided for the exigencies of the government—the crown-land—and land-taxes—as little sufficed now

for the expenses of the state, as the feudal military service for its defence. In this new aspect of affairs it became a question which nation would apply its skill and industry to the greatest advantage. France only discovered this when, later than all her neighbours, she roused herself, under Richelieu and Louis XIV., and endeavoured to make amends for her delay, by the improvements in her marine force, by her commercial industry, and by her attempts at colonization. Two very opposite examples lay before her to invite and to warn her.

The policy of the Spanish kings had been always turned to an aggrandizement of power and dominion, and for this purpose they required the most unlimited authority, and the disposal of all the resources of the state. This system of government both at home and abroad repressed the ancient love of freedom in the people, and checked all intellectual and commercial activity, those means from which other nations, in the altered condition of the world, borrowed their abiding strength. The Spanish settlements were made in the spirit of this despotic policy. They were conducted and regulated by government. To add to her splendour, Spain took possession of enormous tracts of country, which the emigration of a thousand years could scarcely people. Grants of land were only made to native Spaniards, and the mother country exhausted her population, which was already weakened by the expulsion of the Moors and Jews. The settlers looked for gold, for rapid gain, for enjoyment without labour, and thus the incitement to all active energy was stifled. Spanish commerce declined, as agriculture had long ago, under the thralldom and the privileges of class. With the failure of home products, trade ceased, or passed into the hands of strangers. With the poverty of private individuals came weakness to the state, which would have granted a convoy of great fleets to its galleys laden with gold, when it had not a ship for the defence of its coasts. The situation of the colonies themselves, the luxuriant world of the tropics, which needed little human aid for its productions, favoured the indolent inclinations of the southern settler. Religious bigotry impeded the growth of self-dependence and activity of mind, and even where it assumed an appearance of humanity, only promoted the material advantage of the foreigner, with-

out avoiding the deterioration of morals at home; thus, because the inhuman monopoly of the importation of negroes into the Spanish colonies was a scandal to the Catholic church, the trade was given over into the hands of foreigners, and finally, by the *Assiento* of 1711, resigned wholly to the English, who reaped from it an immense profit both for their own commerce and for that of their colonies.

All this was reversed in the Teutonic and democratic colonies. Spain planted the New World, but its fruits have been gathered by the Teutonic race. Under them, everything conduced rather to the welfare, energy, and culture of each member of the state than to the acquisition of territorial power. The state, as the state, did little for the colonization of America. The colonists only took possession of a few tracts of land for their settlements. They were not like the petty nobles of Spain, who emigrated to become paupers and slaves, but belonged to the middle class from the country and the towns, a class which was unknown in the Romanic states. The emigrants from all parts of the world were at liberty to settle down beside the Englishman. The greatest profit fell to the most industrious. Enjoyment was sought in labour. The climate and soil, which resembled the home they had abandoned, sharpened rather than blunted their exertions. The habits of the north, the vigorous spirit of Protestantism, the assiduity of the Teutonic races, everything contributed to favour that great commercial activity at home and in the colonies, from which arose a degree of prosperity and political importance in the middle class, of which history affords no previous example. This prosperity and political importance first became considerable during the wars of freedom in the Netherlands. As soon as this petty nation had asserted its independence, when the tree (according to Maurice of Saxony) was yet only a sapling, it made Antwerp its metropolis, the centre of the commerce of the world, and amassed enormous riches by the freight of goods. In a most unequal conflict, it made war with war. By the activity of its mercantile establishments it first connected the different quarters of the world with one another, by a constant interchange of goods. It soon commanded the greatest naval force in Europe, precipitated the state, which drained the mines of Peru, into bankruptcy, and shook the power of its immense colonies in the

east and in the west. When, some years later, England vied with Holland, and English colonists in America created new states and forms of government for themselves, and when English mercantile houses in the boldness and success of their speculations surpassed those of government, the time had arrived when the middle class of the Teutonic races made its commercial crusade with a more splendid result than that of the religious crusades of the chivalrous champions of Christendom. The most striking example was presented to the world of what could be effected by Teutonic diligence, compared with Romanic inertia—of the earnings of the middle class, compared with those of the proprietors of vast colonial estates; how far the spirit of Protestantism could advance a people beyond that of a religion oppressed by a hierarchical priesthood, and how much freedom of action surpasses despotic institutions in a government.

With these two examples before him, Louis XIV. inclined to both; but, unforeseen to himself, he fell exclusively into that of Spanish policy. He excited and urged forward the commercial industry of France, created a great navy, and promoted emigration and colonization, which had been commenced under Richelieu, in evident rivalry of England. The energy of the government seemed to vie with that of private individuals. Nothing could be more munificent than its conduct during Colbert's administration by legislative enactments and assistance in the construction of canals, roads, &c. But even individual exertion (on which all eventually depends) languished under the guidance of a centralized government and royal management. England also had assisted her commerce by navigation acts and the artificial means of legislation, but most had been effected by the enterprise of private individuals. By the resources of the state the French government created mercantile companies; the English companies proceeded from the people themselves, and their bold enterprising spirit needed no spur from government. The arbitrary administration of France exhausted commerce with fresh taxes, the Englishman taxed himself. The school of Protestantism unfettered the mind, and trained men to activity; Louis drove out his most industrious subjects, and never remembered how difficult it is to excite individual exertion, how easy to stifle it. In the colonies, the French Jesuits in

Canada performed wonders of conversion and martyrdom, but the planters of Louisiana did nothing which could be compared to the miracles performed by Anglo-Saxon energy. The French planter never exhibited the daring spirit of the Anglo-Saxon, who penetrated into the depths of the forest, and conquered the wilderness for cultivation; and he had not, like the Spaniard in the south, the apology of a dreamy tropical climate; the fault was here in the men, who were not accustomed to think and act for themselves in the free life of a community. The result was, that the French colonists assumed a hostile attitude towards England from the commencement. The French settlers in North America surrounded the English colonies of the coast, both in the rear and on either side; they instigated the Indians to attack them; and by a more rapid increase of their settlements, they hoped in some future time easily to advance upon the coast; but this aim of gaining an advantage over the English colonies by their geographical position was defeated by the indifference and incapacity for colonization of the French themselves. The first half-century of the French settlement in Louisiana did not exhibit one tenth part of the population and of the results which were produced in that time in New England. This fact only so much the more stirred up the jealousy of France towards England, which already derived but too much nourishment in their religious differences, in their diverse origin, and in the geographical proximity of the two countries.

This jealousy, which was soon displayed in great wars, proved of material service in laying the foundation of freedom in North America. If the French settlers had succeeded in establishing themselves there in great numbers, the English colonies would probably, from the dread of French rule, have consented to remain faithful to the mother country on any condition whatsoever. As there was no hope of this, France conceived the thought of weakening England by a separation from her colonies; and they, as soon as they saw France change from an enemy into an ally, threw off their regard for the mother country, and set themselves at liberty—an aim they had kept in view ever since the effect of the parliamentary government in England upon them had been developed. England herself, by her home and foreign colonial policy, had given the chief pretext for this alliance of

France, and even of Spain, with her rebellious colonies. However the whole scheme and commercial energy of the English colonies might fundamentally differ from those originating in Romanic nations, yet the practice of the English government had essentially agreed with that of the latter. They all maintained that the mother country had the exclusive right to the trade with the colonies, subjected them to a commercial code, and treated them as a means to attain their ends; every foreign nation was debarred from trading with them; the foreign merchant was treated as a pirate, by which measure he became really such, and the prize was allotted to him whose boldness and activity dared the most, and therefore fell to the energetic Englishman. From the time of the *Assiento* in 1711 the English had annihilated the Spanish American commerce by a shameless system of smuggling, to which the introduction of the negro gave a pretext: about the time of the conclusion of the thirty years truce, the merchants urged upon the English government a war with Spain, on the subject of the exclusive system of monopoly which they themselves practised at home. England was opposed to Spain in the great naval expeditions against Carthage and Panama (in 1741-42), whose object was the separation of Mexico and Peru from the mother-country, as Spain had once opposed England in the time of the *Invincible Armada*, and both armaments met with a similar issue. The world already trembled before the naval power of England, and France consulted with Spain on a compensation by the separation of the English colonies, and also how to ward off danger from her own. The great naval war of 1755 confirmed this project in the mind of France even more than in that of Spain. France paid for it by the loss of Canada and of her navy. The English influence was at that period in the ascendant in the East Indies, and England appeared as much resolved to assert her supremacy over commerce and the ocean, as Spain had ever been to assert hers on shore. In pursuance of these projects, parliament was as despotic as any monarchy in its measures both at home and abroad; England contended against the republican movements in her colonies with the same means as an absolute government might have used. The introduction of negroes was encouraged, to diminish the quantity of dangerous white

labour. The occupation of Canada was long opposed, because the proximity of the French, by their settlements, maintained the dependence of the English. But when the Americans had already succeeded in laying the plan for a federal constitution, which plainly announced their views of possible independence, and the fear of the French (since the wars of 1755) could no longer restrain them, the parliament, instead of trying to attach them by offering conciliatory measures, adopted a still more oppressive line of conduct than that which had already excited their discontent. The parliament, in which the Americans were not represented, and which was even ignorant of their affairs, had, since the Revolution of 1688, invested itself with supreme authority over the colonies and their usages, insisted on the final sentence in matters of jurisdiction being referred to England, treated the colonies only as a commercial establishment, forbade commerce among themselves or with foreign nations, and suppressed all industry. This excited so much discontent about the middle of the seventeenth century that wise men prophesied the approaching separation. But no one yet had conceived the idea of formally imposing a tax upon the colonies. In 1764, when this innovation was first attempted in the shape of a stamp-duty, the systematic resistance began. The first open rupture was occasioned by the tax on tea. The national congress of 1774 commenced by a declaration of rights, in which they announced their intention of maintaining all existing relations, and in which they computed and vindicated their ancient privileges, following the example of the English in their declaration of rights to William III. They yet shrank from the name of rebellion; but with the reckless oppression of England grew the desire for independence in the colonies, which was declared in 1776. The injustice of decrees to satisfy the covetous desires of the mother country had irritated them, the folly of vacillating resolutions had inspired them with courage; the last brutal procedure (which Fox called, the scalping tomahawk measure) ended all hesitation. The year 1782 gave the colonies their independence. France had in 1778 declared war on England; all the naval force of the west opposed her, and that of the east disputed her usurpation of the sea. But there was a considerable difference in the position of England at that

time from that of the former rulers of the world when placed in similar circumstances. The greatest men of the English parliament had been all along opposed to the taxation of the colonies for the benefit of the English treasury; they had rejoiced in the insurrection, and prophesied its victories. The parliament early adopted their views, and refused to prolong the war indefinitely, as the Spaniards had in the Netherlands. England was no more weakened by the loss of her colonies, (as France had intended,) than she was by the closing of the continent under Napoleon; on the contrary, the full development of her internal strength and her judicious administration, only then began to display itself. That to which she for the most part owed the greatness of her commerce, and the power it communicated to her government, the active energy of the people, no war could vanquish, but, on the contrary, was strengthened by the freedom of the state and of the trade with North America. In these results a sentence of condemnation was pronounced on the old colonial system. The separation of the Spanish colonies was the natural result of the liberation of North America. The errors of the prevailing commercial system were more and more demonstrated, and renounced. The first great path to freedom of intercourse was opened, and has been continued in after times, as well as that leading to political freedom, by the foundation of the American states.

The foreign aid of France had helped to complete the independence of the United States (a turn of affairs which would never have been supposed possible in the reign of Louis XIV.); the influence of the intellectual movement which had taken place in France contributed to form the institutions of the government within the new federal state; and these two facts led to the entire overthrow of the French constitution, which could have been still less divined in the time of Louis. The work which absolutism had intended to complete, without unshackling the strength of the people, had miscarried on the field of material life; on that of the intellect it destroyed itself, while involuntarily it liberated the same power, forgetting that, more especially in the region of the mind, it is easy to stir up, but very difficult to quench, the excitement of men's spirits. Under Protestant governments the national character was formed in schools

for the people. It thus slowly advanced in Germany from religious enlightenment to general knowledge, and the national literature was gradually matured and participated in by all. In France, Louis XIV. invited literature to his court, and, cherished by him, it became an accessory to his splendour, which added to the fame of his arms the glory of being the patron of the Muses. It was intended to be an intellectual luxury of the court, but became a practical tool in the hands of the people. Absolutism acted here, on a wider field, the part which Pisistratus, as the patron of genius, had played in Athens, who founded his government at a time when he could lead the credulous Athenians like a living Pallas, and lost it when a free spirit like that of Æschylus was born: absolutism undermined its own work, and acted on this occasion much in the spirit of the Protestants, who allied themselves with princes in the commencement of the church reformation. They sought the protection of princes for their religious freedom, and for a time fell under princely despotism. If this was an error, Absolutism now committed a similar and greater error. From the first efforts of princes to withdraw themselves from the influence of their vassals, they sought assistance from men of education. They granted the chief places in the government to ecclesiastics and jurists rather than to the nobles, to moral power, rather than to arms and great possessions. By this systematic encouragement given to literature they created a new class, and imparted new influence to the press, both of which soon forgot to whom they owed their origin. In the plays and romances of Corneille and Fénelon the celebration of republican virtues was admitted, but the people were not long in making a useful induction from the Fine Arts, and converting poetry into prose. The art of writing had been applied to the purpose of leading public opinion; but public opinion soon took the writers themselves into its service. The spirit of innovation, which was excluded from the field of politics, seized on literature, where it exercised an irresistible power. Proceeding from the higher classes, spiritual life degenerated with freedom of manners, and the fortunate or unfortunate levity of the court permitted them to flourish together. Bold critics attacked everything in church and state, and prescribed a greater simplicity in education and

life, and a new freedom in the institutions of the government. As if to avenge the loss of liberty in matters of faith, they leapt at once from the repression of all inquiry to free-thinking, from superstition to the fullest scepticism. In politics, the attack on the monarchy was supported by the example of the spiritual and secular aristocracy of the middle ages; and, from what in them had merely been the result of selfish views, or the natural growth of changes in the state, a system of democratic institutions and the maxims of an administration were founded, which for the first time was opposed on comprehensive grounds to the hierarchical and feudal institutions of the middle ages. The political innovations in the science of government and of practical philosophy in France acted in a twofold manner, and in two directions, on the governments and the governed, varying according to their geographical position, east or west. These new opinions addressed the people on the constitution of the state, and the government on the theory of administration; the former carried its sphere of action into America, the latter into nearly all the courts of Europe. Both concurred to produce the fearful volcano of the French revolution in 1789.

The most obvious results of the splendid reign of Louis XIV., in its effect on the courts of Europe, was, that it excited an endeavour to imitate his military system and efforts for aggrandizement. An army of 400,000 men, which Louis at last possessed, a standing army in full accoutrement, no longer dependent either on the favour of a feudal lord or on the provincial assemblies for its maintenance, was so sure a means by which to obtain despotic power, and so menacing to every other state, that, both by the attraction of the former and the fear of the latter, they were determined to follow his example. Military states were added to military states in Eastern Europe; Austria, Prussia, Sweden, Russia, Poland, Turkey—states which had a superfluity of rude masses of people, on whom there had scarcely yet dawned a ray of mental culture, and to whom hardly any of the commercial industry of the middle class of the West of Europe had penetrated. These countries were only just emerging from the feudal military system, which was replaced by another, favourable to the unlimited power of the prince, though still more dangerous for the development of the state itself.

But even in them exaggerated despotism possessed a counterpoise in itself. The increase of the army made increased resources necessary, and called for further power of taxation in the people. This obliged the princes to attend to their interests. The prosperity of the free Western states made the people of the East desire similar fruits of commercial diligence and trade, while the new physiocratic theories of government promised to convert agriculture into the chief source of a nation's wealth. To gain advantage from either, it was necessary to promote the independent exertions of the lower classes, the diffusion of knowledge became the aim of all governments; and they found the theory how it might be attained in French literature. Frederick II. in a rude military state decided the period of the commencement of this philanthropic bias. He was at the same time the last among the princes who, during his wars in Silesia, carried on the system of military occupation of the thirty years war of the North, and of the Spanish war of succession; but he was also the first who openly acknowledged the doctrines of French philosophy and political science, and aimed at the internal welfare of the people. By this precedence his reign forms the principal subject of the history of Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century. His example was followed in Portugal under the administration of Pombal, in Spain under Campomanes and Aranda, in Naples under Tanucci, in Tuscany under Leopold, in Austria under Joseph II., in a succession of petty German states, in Scandinavia and even in Russia under Catharine II. Improvements were effected in the schools and in the education of the people; and to these were added revision of the legislature, a more equalized and well-ordered administration, attention to political economy, to trade, and industry, to a useful distribution of land, to relieving agriculture and commerce from burdensome restrictions, to just taxation, and to the removal of monopolies; the privileges of the few were diminished in favour of the rights of all, a greater equality of ranks established, and another attack made on the remains of feudalism. These were the general views on which the reforms in all the above-mentioned states were conducted. It seemed as if absolutism had at last learnt its vocation—to be the school of freedom, and, from the highest to the lowest,

to confirm the happiness of the people. The vocation of absolutism, in its first commencement in the fifteenth century, had been to raise the class of the commons, and to maintain the whole state against the active power of the nobles and of the hierarchy: that vocation it now again fulfilled, though in a lesser degree; while it elevated the lower orders, defended their freedom of taxation and privileges from the passive aggressions of the upper classes, or at least made them less oppressive. These privileges and prejudices of the higher classes were attacked in their very existence, with more or less forbearance, in the zeal of ministerial and princely reforms of those days. How far this zeal extended is proved more by the position assumed by a Leopold and a Joseph II. towards the Papal See, and by the destruction of the order of Jesuits, to which the Bourbons forced the Pope, than by anything else. In all Protestant countries now, where the clergy did not offer any opposition, bold innovations were ventured upon. The people were gradually prepared to comprehend them; and the fullest blossoms of art and science, of philosophical and religious freedom, and of religious thought, were scattered among them. The most entire reformation of the ecclesiastical and social condition could be now established, without either meeting with resistance or exciting prejudice. But all these attempts were wrecked in the Catholic countries by the resistance of the long-established power of the nobles and priests, and by the people, who, kept in leading-strings, as children, were unprepared for the change. This was the fate of Hungary under Joseph II., of Belgium, and of the ministerial reforms in Spain, Portugal, and Naples. In Catholic France, the same attempts were wrecked by the same resistance on the part of the privileged classes. Turgot also proposed to make these classes subservient to the interests of the state, to annihilate villainage, serfdom, and privileges, and to set trade and industry free from the limits of land and provincial boundaries. He endeavoured, by more liberal municipal and provincial institutions, to re-awaken the stifled energies of the people, and advancing by degrees to restore the constitution of the states in the provinces. The opposition of the higher classes, which would have suffered by these regulations, overthrew the reforming schemes of the government, as had been the case in every Catholic country. But here the king, who

permitted his ministers to fall, was himself overthrown, as well as the old constitution on which they had been wrecked. The French people separated themselves hostilely from the upper classes, instead of allowing themselves any longer to be led and oppressed by them. The golden age, which was expected to descend from above by gentle reforms, burst upon the century by a fearful revolution from below. Experience seemed to prove that even gradual reforms cannot be carried through without the will of the people themselves, and without the strength which lay in this will; that the ruling powers will not be brought to make so great a sacrifice to the state without being forced to it by the strong arm of necessity. The spirit of history was proclaimed in France. The free spirit of Protestantism, which could not penetrate the Romanic nations by the direct way of religious reform, entered now by the circuitous route of literature, and impelled the people of France towards the same end at which the free Teutonic states, in their religious struggles, had arrived. To develop national industry and political freedom, the people must henceforth continue what the princes had begun; the work could no longer be done *for* the people, but *by* the people; nations could not be made happy by theories, but by their own free will, to their own satisfaction, which is the noblest end a state can ever arrive at. Reformations by the people were to take the place of those by the prince, self-government the place of protection, and the legislation by the people the place of despotic power. The difference may be explained in a few words: instead of an improvement in the administration, there should be an improvement in the constitution. The mighty strength of the people was therefore indispensable. Experience has never yet given us an example of a despotic monarchy leading to a moderate constitution, or of a royal road to the freedom of the people. The best-intentioned monarchs, desirous of reforms in the state, have always confined themselves to improvements in the administration, of which the people have never been secure without a constitution. Not one of the princes who at that time attempted the boldest reforms proposed such an innovation. Frederick II. admired the Quaker state of Pennsylvania, and granted Neuchâtel her freedom, without even dreaming of preparing his own subjects for a similar freedom; and when constitutional changes were proposed and effected

in France and Poland, the allied princes conspired against both.

The administrative reforms which had been carried out by the princes of Europe adhered to the system of political economy contained in French literature; the revolutionary impetus of the people towards a change in the constitution urged the bold doctrines of a more liberal philosophy in the state, which aimed at future political reformatations. Macchiavelli, in his days, had sought a remedy for the evils inherent in the feudal system in temporary despotism for the good of the people. Despotism, while it healed the most outrageous, left the more subtle injuries untouched.—And by the side of the first evil, despotism itself had grown into a second, because it had gradually abandoned its patriotic aims, and thought only of the attainment of its personal ends. It had perpetuated its authority, increased monarchical centralization, and thus, amidst the disorders of the state, produced a striking contrast between the conditions of life, and the claims, of the educated. Montesquieu and Rousseau attacked these vices in opposite ways. Montesquieu traced the root of the evil in the remains of the feudal system, which had undermined all patriotism. Seeking for a better form of state, he looked into the past, to the old Teutonic constitution, which appeared to him degenerated in the institution of feudalism, but fully restored to the Old World, together with its lost symbols of government, in the English constitution. Montesquieu therefore recommended this constitution in a work of an entirely scientific character, only accessible to a few of the learned. He expressed himself with caution and timidity; he taught by suggestions because he dared not express all his views in words; he would not find fault with existing institutions, while he praised a free constitution; he even did not think too much should be left to reason, or that too much freedom was desirable, since mankind should move in a central course and not in extremes. All that Montesquieu was opposed to, Rousseau advocated the more earnestly; and that which Montesquieu desired and taught, Rousseau opposed. He preached entire freedom, and experience had no weight with him compared with the demands of reason for the management of the state. And he preached this to all, and in a manner adapted to the general

comprehension, by an open attack on every existing institution. He traced the root of the evil in the submission to tyranny in the present day, and not in the remains of the feudal system. He abused Saumaise and Grotius, who had systematized despotism, and he opposed the most exaggerated rights of man to their theories on slavery and on our animal nature. He derided, on a political ground, Luther's doctrine of passive obedience, and that God in his wrath will punish wicked kings. If we must obey a bad ruler, there is so much the more reason that we should select a good one; it is well for a people to submit to a power stronger than themselves, but it is better, when they have strength, to shake it off. In these aphorisms spoke the Calvinism of Geneva. A political revolution, as well as a religious reformation, was destined to be preached from this refuge of the free spirit of France. Old Calvinistic political doctrines lay at the foundation of Rousseau's theories. Junius Brutus (Languet), in 1577, declared the law that the force of a silent natural compact among the people is greater than the will of princes, and entitles them to enforce the government of law, because the state is composed of the people and not of the king. It was thus also that Milton declared the rights of man and of a people to freedom, as natural and inalienable. By the Calvinistic right of the community to interpret the religious law, and practically to demonstrate the political theories of legislation, the sovereignty already lay in the people. Rousseau laboured on in the same ideas. He inveighed against the monstrous proposition that a man should by the chance of birth reign as a hereditary monarch over a nation, and that children should rule over old men, and the few over the many. He opposed a natural right to the hierarchical doctrine of the state—the legal fiction of a social compact to the theological invention of the divine right of monarchs. If Revelation points to monarchy, he pointed to reason and natural right in favour of the sovereign people. He therefore hated the English constitution, which Montesquieu praised. His ideal of a form of government was that of the early Teutonic petty democracies which actually existed in Switzerland, America, and the Netherlands. The gulf which lay between his theories and the condition of all the great states in Europe did not disturb his convic-

tions. He was above all consideration of realities and existing relations; for he trusted that the future would dispense with the present as well as with the past. What was superannuated wrong, before the inalienable primitive rights of man? Rousseau thoughtlessly advised the people to make use of their physical strength to enforce their rights; and in this lay the enormous power of his doctrines. The idea of a social compact as the commencement of a state is only a new illusion in place of the old. But if we survey the different epochs of history, when a people politically matured could no longer suffer an arbitrary government, every resolution is a confirmation of Rousseau's principles, and his principle is the banner of every revolution. The state does not commence, but is at its acme in the sphere of popular rule. States originate in social compacts, but the government of the people, for the most part, belongs to colonies, off-shoots of states which have already arrived at a political maturity. The example of North America had evidently acted upon Rousseau's views. He adopted the really exceptional circumstances of that country as a foundation for his theories, which returned to America as a rule which could be universally applied. For Rousseau, by a remarkable instinct, predicted the whole spirit of the coming age, which lay brooding over the extraordinary events which soon took place on both sides of the ocean. It is well known how his theories assisted to produce that which took place in Corsica, in Geneva, and in Poland. The remarkable agreement between his doctrines and the course of the French revolution has been exhibited. The contest between the national ideas, and those of universal brotherhood which these times excited, is reflected in the striking contradictions in his own theories, and in his alternate inclinations and antipathies. The theories of Rousseau were first brought into practice in the American constitution as the principles of a new code of politics.

The combination of the new theories of government with their realization after the independence of the American colonies, accelerated the re-action of the movements for freedom in the New World, upon the Old. Europe had only expected that America would exercise an influence over her material interests, but she now perceived that her influence, morally and politically, was still greater. The first emigrants

in the seventeenth century were to some extent aware that their republican institutions might become an example to all nations. And this belief was justified, even prior to the surprising prosperity of the new state. The incentive to action and its strength lay in the constitution itself, and its rapid results can only be accounted for, by the matured and widely diffused political education of the time. The incentive in the constitution was its greater freedom, its common sense and its accordance with nature, its fundamental principle and logical consequence; it was besides applicable to all people who were discontented with their actual condition, and who had found nothing in the past worthy to be retained. This last was the fundamental principle, the mainspring of the practical working of the American constitution. Particular rights and liberties had till now been the motive for all movements in the cause of freedom. In these very claims lay the idea of only an exception to the prevailing bondage; and in a nation like France even these partial liberties were lost and forgotten; or, if remembered, were imperfect and no longer desired. But in America, equal rights were established, not as an acquired possession or as private property, but as a native right, independent of law and tradition. Universal liberty was recognised as a truth of nature and not as an historical fact. Political claims were no longer confined to existing institutions or religious tenets; they were founded on independent political thought, and were directed to promote the views of men, who, in consequence of the intellectual resuscitation of the century, had begun to think for themselves on the subject of politics. Rational theories applicable to all were suggested as guides to legislation; a general spirit of freedom and of humanity might be observed, which, apart from all particular circumstances, decided the general principles of every particular act of legislation. These two properties, ideality and universality, or rather the recognition of freedom of thought in political matters, and of one law for all, were the causes of the diffusion of intellect and power which the American constitution had produced; and, since the total change in the condition and aspects of the world had, by a gradual political emancipation, awakened the sympathy of the people in the interests and fortunes of the state. The immense power which lay concealed in both these principles of the American

constitution were not immediately perceived. It was only when their first effects were felt in France, when the same recognition of freedom of thought, and of one political aim for all, began to appear, when the men of 1789 sounded the praises of their revolution as a first step to the liberties of Europe, as a monument raised for the instruction of mankind, it was only then that the adherents to old institutions in England began to tremble; though but a short time before they had advocated the cause of the freedom of America. From that time the cabinets of Europe joined in an alliance hostile to the people, and combated the new principles of social organization, by a policy resembling that with which they formerly waged war against the various creeds of Christendom. Gentz accurately predicted the entire revolution which the strength of this new spirit would introduce in the character of history. He perceived that in all earlier revolutions, in Germany, Holland, and England, a purely national, local, particular aim was sought after, and even this, without any distinct recognition of a special object: whilst the aim of these revolutions in America and France was universal, and applicable, in motive, end, and principle, to all ages and nations. Here lay their strength and importance, and in the consciousness of what they aimed at, the dangerous tendency of their doctrine. For this principle survived the revolution itself, was bequeathed to the people, and became the common property of the world.

When American freedom passed over into France, it retained its most prominent features. The course of all political and religious freedom, which had hitherto moved only from east to west, among the Teutonic Protestant nations, was stayed in America by a natural limit, and rebounded now from west to east. The political idea had in America separated itself from all admixture of religious ideas and in the pure democracy which reigned there, under which the people from all nations lived contented, had even shaken off the narrow views of nationality. The peculiar characteristics of Teutonic Protestantism were no longer a necessary condition for its diffusion. At its first return to Europe, it conquered the greatest among the Catholic and Romanic nations, and thus opened a new field of action. As the despotism of the East once gave the impulse to the despotic

institutions of Europe, so the West now began to exercise her influence in an opposite direction, by assisting the progress of democracy.

If the decline of the Romanic nations was to be arrested and their prosperity to return, France could alone lead the way by her example. She, at least, had been lately affected by the struggles for freedom, and had only just carried through a great moral revolution. By her proximity to England she was excited to a constant political rivalry. The danger which menaced her in the eighteenth century was, that she also might sink into the political apathy, the moral slough, in which Italy and Spain had lost all their power abroad, and all independent existence at home. France was aware of the immense advantage England had gained over her by the freedom of her government, and by the active and progressive state of existence expressed in the national character; and she was stimulated to exertion, to make the resources and powers her own which spring from the participation of the people in the guidance of the state. It was therefore a just, or a national rather than aristocratic instinct, which inspired so unconcealed a hatred in Englishmen like Pitt against the French revolution. They feared the renovated strength which France would have derived from a constitution like their own; and Pitt gladly consoled himself with the reflection that the Bourbons would not know how to gather the fruits of such an institution. In the commencement of the revolution only one image fully presented itself to the Englishman, which was that France would, at the recommendation of Montesquieu, adopt the English constitution. The anxiety lest the American principles should gain ground here, lest Rousseau rather than Montesquieu should prevail, was allayed during the extravagances of the Republic, and vanished under the Dictatorship of Napoleon. It appeared contrary to reason to attempt to establish the institutions of a young state on one in the decay of age, the simple habits of freedom on an over-refined civilization, equality in a society in which there yet existed so many grades. It seemed incredible that institutions and powers in the state, from the maintenance of which England herself derived so great an advantage, should be resigned. But these institutions and powers had not preserved their beneficial effect in France, which alone

rendered their maintenance in England possible. How attractive to the French were the new political theories of literature, which inveighed against old political institutions for which they blushed while they felt their oppression! How the parallel of the two, inclined them to desire an overthrow of this obsolete condition! France had within her the history of a constitution, but of an injured one. She had forms, but they were worn out; she had traditions, but they were hated. The monarchy had become here an established despotism, supported by military power. The rights of the states-general had been lost for two hundred years; the provincial institutions were without connexion or plan; the middle class, the most important part of the social economy, was without a representation. The aristocracy possessed more than half the land of France free from taxes, and were the oppressors of the unprivileged multitude; besides, in political importance, they were an expiring body, which later on, in the notorious night of August (an event scarcely to be credited in England), completed its own destruction. This was the condition of France on which the attempts of reformation by Turgot and Malesherbes were wrecked; she had long been undermined by that inward revolution in the minds of men which had shaken old prejudices, and had destroyed the received respect for existing institutions. It was therefore inconceivable how a constitutional edifice like that in England, could be erected with as little trouble out of such weather-beaten materials, in a time when the democratic tendencies of the public mind had begun to act upon the monarchy by the levelling nature of its influence on all social institutions, and on literature by the freedom with which it inveighed against oppressive government. It was however just as inconceivable how the democratic spirit could surmount the impediments of old-established social forms and institutions with the same ease as in America. For these same institutions still existed in France; while those which the Americans had left in England were here to be at once destroyed. Even the Reign of Terror could only temporarily succeed in this work at the commencement of the revolution. If France could then have determined her choice between the two constitutions, the English or the American, a great blow would have been struck in favour of the prevalence of the latter constitution in Europe,

and the cause of freedom been secured in France as well as in the whole of this quarter of the world. That Triumvirate of free states would have been formed in the West, which Fox considered as an invincible barrier against despotism. But France could not decide; the peculiar character of the nation, ever vacillating between the Protestant and Catholic faiths, between Teutonic and Romanic, free and despotic elements, which we have described in her entire history, prevailed once more in this crisis.

It was not in the rapid changes which the revolution passed through, from unlimited to limited monarchy, from that to a republic, and from a republic through an oligarchy and despotism back to a constitutional monarchy, that this vacillation was exhibited. For this hurried movement through all the steps of historical development, this rapid evolution through the whole circle of political life, lies in the idea and existence of every revolution, and is expressed in the very word. It was even the case in England; but there the inclinations of the people, during all the phases of the revolution, pointed back unhesitatingly to the one original form of the state which absolutism itself never entirely renounced; for which, even under the Republic, the protests of many private individuals and a number of attempts at resistance, evinced the predilection, to which the head of the Republic returned by his own free-will, and on which the nation seized with unanimous and enduring affection. The vacillating character of the French people is exhibited in their never having, either during their revolution, or at its conclusion, or in after times, given a proof of an instinctive decided predilection in favour of any one form of constitution, and that the various constitutional forms of government which have been tried, have never been fully carried out. This is most strikingly exemplified in the attempt to form a constitution in 1791. The essential principle of a mixed form of government was entirely lost sight of. The middle class had acquired political rights for themselves only to abuse them. Instead of, as in England, leaving those privileges untouched which were necessary for the existence of the monarchy, and only placing themselves on a level with the higher classes by an equality of rights, they almost abolished every royal privilege, and by one stroke put an end to the order of nobles, to the House

of Peers, and to every hereditary distinction of class as well as to all privilege. But whilst this third class, in a completely democratic spirit, appeared to remove every distinction of rank between them and those above them, they again separated themselves, in the most aristocratic spirit, from the fourth class, and created new privileges for themselves. In this contradiction of principle and conduct the middle class only appeared to think how they could get possession of power. This was not however really the case. In the introduction to the constitution of 1791, the principle of the sovereignty of the people, of the participation of all in the verdict of the nation, was expressly established, and almost all the actual results of an entirely democratic order of affairs entered into the constitution. The middle class thus created, or at least encouraged, their natural rival from below them, while they at one and the same time deprived themselves of every support from the upper ranks, drove the nobles into exile, excited the hostility of the clergy, and obliged the king to fly. Thus they destroyed the constitutional form of government, which required time and the good will of all classes of the people to bring to perfection, and during this short-lived period, and amidst a distracted people, put an end to their own existence by their self-contradictions. But even the simple form of government which succeeded suffered from the same internal discords. The fourth class, by its revolution, gained the constitution of 1793, the republic, universal suffrage, full political and social equality, the unlimited authority of the people, and the condition of the American democracy. But instead of this principle of individuality leading as a logical consequence (according to Rousseau's theories and as in all former practical democracies) to independence and the self-government of those by whom a state should naturally be conducted, every thought of federalism (if it was ever seriously entertained) was stifled in its birth by the preponderating influence of the metropolis. The republic emulated absolutism not only in the excess of centralization, but also in its administration, and thereby kept the soil prepared for a return to despotism. When Bonaparte then brought back the absolutism of Louis XIV., founded a military government with a new feudal nobility, and re-established the universal empire, he, the strongest and most absolute of despots, maintained the

inmost core of the republican revolution, strengthened its most powerful spring, and, following the lead of the genius of France, harboured and cherished the theory of equality, and used democratic terms in his legislative enactments. Thus the way was kept open for a return to democracy. If the vacillation between opposite tendencies and the inclination to extremes found nourishment in the national character, it is but just to add, the situation of France with regard to foreign powers almost forced her into them. The isolated position of England has not alone had its share in producing her prosperity, but has contributed to form the wisdom of her constitution, and the moderate and discreet character of her people. It has not been as easy for any continental nation to arrive at these qualities or their consequences. The menacing power of Spain in the sixteenth century obliged France to strengthen herself by a return to the strongest possible unity in the state. She was repeatedly exposed to similar dangers during the revolution, when unity again became necessary for her preservation. The constitutional monarchy of Louis XVI., and the moderate institution of the Dictatorship, showed themselves twice either unwilling or unable to meet the alarming confederacy of European princes. The Reign of Terror, the refuse of the successes of the people, was first needed to collect the whole effective force of the country, and, later on, the universal empire and military despotism of Napoleon to fight the great nations of the East with their own weapons.

It had been foreseen from the time of the Consulate that the work of revolution in the French government, too quickly raised and too rashly demolished, must be again resumed, and be conducted by slow degrees to perfection. The revolution, in its earliest stages, had created institutions which, after a time, disappeared; but the healthy principles of the movement remained—they could not be long insulted either by the great conqueror, who made amends for the decline of freedom by increasing the power and fame of France, or by the clumsy restoration of the Bourbons, or by their subtle advances to power, without in time revenging their cause and leading to a restoration of their disputed liberties. Offences of the same kind will in future lead to similar re-actions. But even when the first hasty fruits of the revolution prematurely fell from

the tree, they scattered abroad its seeds over France, and further still in foreign lands: she seemed destined to sow the seed in Europe, whose fruit she herself had only gathered from her internal conflicts. Napoleon, even when apparently demolishing the work of the revolution in his own country, assisted wonderfully to spread its principles abroad. A despot in France, he became the most dangerous agitator for revolutions in every other country, and was regarded as such by the statesmen of Austria, even when he was most eager to lead the way back to legitimate monarchy. He strengthened the ideas of the revolution by selecting from them such as were most tenable and useful, and with moderation and order promulgating them from the ruler down to the people. He had learnt by experience how impossible it is to restrain the unfettered mob; and he returned to the path of the history of twenty or thirty years before, when interrupting the course of events he resumed the reforms of the princes of the eighteenth century, which had been interrupted. He returned to the principles of those times when, in writing to Charles IV., he thus expressed himself—"all for, and nothing by, the people." These reforms had now an additional motive in the energy derived from the events of the revolution, and the power of the emperor. Even in the Catholic Romanic states they broke down all resistance from the privileged classes and the people, and in a few years wrought changes in the world such as would have required the preparation of centuries without this violent impulse. Under these influences, Spain recovered her youth, and by a new system, in the course of a few years, laboured to shake off the burdens, which the country could not even then have removed by her own unassisted strength. Italy woke from a sleep of three hundred years: her religious prejudices were broken through, her political inaction interrupted, and the larger boundaries of national unity opened before her, which [papal influence had always counteracted, and which since then it has continued slowly to counteract. By depriving some hundred little German states of their independent governments, Napoleon destroyed at one blow the feudal constitution of the empire. This necessary deed of violence, now laid to the account of the foreign conqueror, and which the Germans could with difficulty have resolved on, opened the first prospect of a great national

unity in Germany; and the smaller states, which were enlarged by Napoleon, have since become the hearths on which the fire of political agitation has been kept burning for the whole country. Prussia, since the administration of Stein, has been included into the circle of states. He acknowledged that he borrowed his principles of reform which the monarch conferred upon the people, and his scheme of legislation, directly from the French revolution. Napoleon granted constitutions to a few countries dependent on France—the kingdoms of Naples, Westphalia, and Spain. They were only counterfeits, but they accustomed the people to some degree of constitutional freedom, and to a few served as a political school. In this Napoleon, though with caution, overleaped the boundaries of the circle of princely reforms of the eighteenth century, which only related to the administration. In every other respect he remained expressly within the same circle, though he moved in its widest paths. Alliances, exchange of commodities, intercourse and connexion with the European family, were carried on on a larger scale than they had ever been known before. However oppressive and unusual were the circumstances attendant on his closing the Continent, it yet gave an immense impulse to the industry of Europe. The circumference of Colbert's former labours shrinks into a small space compared to the boundless regions over which Napoleon's influence was diffused, and from whence arose inventions useful to private individuals and to nations—canals, roads, and scientific and mechanic institutes. The more oppressive was his administration in dependent states, the more he studied order, simplicity, and arrangement. A standing army was a recent innovation in the oldest countries. Public tribunals of justice were established in the whole of the western part of the Continent, and the principle of equality before the law reached as far as Poland, with Napoleon's code of legislation. French laws, relating to the rights of the middle class, were admitted into Russia, and the incitement to amelioration in the schools took effect even in these distant regions. Never was a more universal and powerful blow struck at the tenacious remains of feudalism than by the mighty hand of Napoleon. The lower orders of the people now first learnt to consider this cause as their own, and as such to prolong the struggle; and

this despotic ruler merited no enmity so well as that of the feudal nobility of Europe. In Naples and Spain, where the immunities of the nobles were greatest, where the feudal system had struck its deepest roots, it was shaken and partly set aside; while the German orders of knighthood and the nobles immediately dependent on the empire, disappeared entirely. The abuses of the hierarchy were shaken by the same blow. The deeds of violence, by which the dark spirit of Catholicism in Bavaria, and similar countries, was broken, which appropriated church lands, diminished the number of monasteries, and whenever it was possible abolished them and endeavoured to destroy spiritual dominion in Germany, had a beneficial effect. The secularization of the ecclesiastical states and lands weakened the temporal power of the Church, which had extended over almost two thousand square miles, and over more than three millions of human beings, and struck it a heavier blow than even the Reformation. Though many of these reforms have been abrogated, they have, by the firm hold they had taken on society and by their wide diffusion, altered the whole social fabric, and impressed their character on subsequent history.

But the benefits and reforms which Napoleon introduced into the nations he had conquered, were not the only agency which favoured universal freedom; that which was intended for its suppression promoted it in a still greater degree. The Emperor laboured with better fortune and a more distinct purpose than any of his predecessors at the foundation of a universal monarchy for France, when such a phenomenon was least expected. Under the pretext of defending France, he had achieved the greatest conquests; stimulated by his predilection for Italy, encouraged by the blind obedience of the nation he governed, by the miserably weak condition of Germany and of all the dynasties which surrounded him, he aimed at an aggrandizement of territory, in which he justified himself by pleading the example of the Eastern powers in their partition of Poland: and thus he entered upon the path of conquest. The deeply laid jealousy of France towards England prompted him to stretch his arms across to her. England had received a rich compensation for her losses in America, by her acquisitions in the East and West Indies, and of some of the most important places in Europe and Africa; she had

opposed the French Republic on constitutional and national grounds; and she now resisted the attacks of the victorious usurper upon the same grounds which had roused William III. against Louis XIV.—England contended for an equal balance of the powers of Europe in a war before which the Carthaginian wars, to which Napoleon compared it, vanish; and Napoleon set resources in motion against the islanders before which the powers of Charles V. and Louis XIV. appear trifling. He would have gladly granted everything to any European power which would have been a faithful and zealous ally against England. In the eager pursuit of his object, he sold the valuable French colonies in North America to the United States, well knowing that he had thereby given the severest stroke to the future of England. He endeavoured to conquer her by the circuitous route of the subjection of the whole of Europe. In this view he usurped the Empire of the West, seized on the iron crown of Italy, restored the secular empire in express imitation of Charlemagne, and the papacy and hierarchy after the example of Charles V., that by the support of Catholicism and by papal influence he might obtain a means by which to vanquish the world. No universal monarch had ever yet so nearly reached the consummation of his wishes as Napoleon, when he almost annihilated Prussia, weakened the power of Austria, had entered into an alliance with Russia, and subdued or held in his dependence Holland, Italy, and Germany. He now first conceived the idea of placing the members of his own family as princes over Spain and Portugal, in which he included their colonies in America. But his conquests, his seizure on the thrones of other nations, his oppression of the people who either formed a part or were attached to this universal empire, brought on events which by the very ascendancy of his despotic power, and by the violence of his arbitrary rule, led in the course of time to the advantage of the cause of freedom. The passive submission of the people to the rule of the monarch or to established dynasties had been shaken, and the sanctity of crowned heads destroyed. A girdle of little republics was at first drawn round France, but, as these disappeared, the new monarchical institutions which replaced them did even more than the republics to injure monarchy. The violent dismembership of nations, caused by the formation

of Napoleon's new states dependent on France, destroyed with the feeling of nationality, the traditions of countries, and struck at the roots of monarchy. And now the numerous princes and kings, enemies of the Emperor, by whom they had been deposed, expelled, and proscribed—his friends, whom he had so frequently abused and harassed—his relations, whom he had treated like officials he might dismiss at pleasure, came forward to remind the world that princes are only mortal men; and the lesson was not forgotten in 1830 and 1840. How the aspect of affairs was changed since the successor of the oldest of the Cæsars was at Erfurt excluded from the assembly of princes, and beside him a half-Asiatic Czar, whose power, compared with his, was still in its infancy, whilst one, the creation of yesterday, yet mightier than either, stood before them, destined so soon to fall from his towering height! The uncertain alliance of princes could not drag him down, but the determined efforts of the people succeeded. Napoleon had provoked the hatred of princes and nobles, but he now unwisely provoked the people by playing with their existence as nations, by the excessive burdens of his military garrisons and his exactions, and by his contemptuous violation of all regard for their material interests; and besides, France herself was tired of his glory and magnificence, purchased by oppressive taxes on person and property, conscriptions, tribunals from which there was no appeal, and *droits réunis*. In 1808 Napoleon hoped to arm the pride of all nations against the pride of England, but, on the contrary, England armed the passions of all the people of Europe against his ambition and blind recklessness of human suffering. His suppression of national liberties, his policy of dismembering nations, roused the egotism of the people against him, who everywhere proved they had awoke from their political apathy. When Spain unwillingly roused herself against France, England, who had only feebly supported the cabinets of the eastern powers, came forward with her counsel, money, and soldiers; and now the monarchs of the continent received a practical lesson how and by what means national independence can alone be maintained. The wars carried on by the people in Spain, Russia, and Germany announced the new era in countries beyond France, and to times beyond the duration of the French Empire. The arms of the monarchs themselves were demo-

cratic ; the war against the tyrant was in the name of the freedom of the people, carried on by armies animated by a national and political feeling ; and rather *for* than *against* the modified principles of the revolution. In this the change which had taken place in the age appeared and made the conclusion of the revolution not less revolutionary than its commencement.

The most fearful extremes were resorted to both in the beginning and at the end of the French Revolution ; first, the Reign of Terror, and lastly imperial military despotism. Freedom in France and the independence of almost all the European powers were lost under Napoleon ; neither was France compensated for her loss by her power and greatness, nor Europe by the free institutions which Napoleon introduced ; the European movements of 1813 were necessary, as Pitt predicted in 1805, to restore the natural position of the excited and intolerable state of all countries in this quarter of the world. It appeared possible that they might recover their natural position by attending to the lesson taught in the events themselves, by healing the many injuries inflicted on the nationality of the people, by securing their liberties and rights by an upright and faithful agreement, and maintaining a middle course between the extremes of the sovereignty of the people, and the despotism of the prince. However his nature might revolt against it, Napoleon, on his return from Elba, appeared to have learnt this lesson. He proclaimed that he returned with a new system of home and foreign policy ; that in harmony with the wishes of the people he desired a free constitution ; that he intended to resign his project of a great Empire, since the movement in Europe in favour of peace and the independent existence of nations had arrested him in his course of victory ; his genius had wrestled with the Age, and the Age had conquered. In this new view, his master-mind had grasped the meaning of events. But ambition and the thirst for glory would infallibly have conquered again, if the Emperor had remained long in possession of the throne. The constraint he put on himself in the hundred days was met by the doubts of all the educated classes of society. By his example, the greatest which could have been presented, they learned once more that reforms emanating from princes cannot be relied on, that liberty is the heritage of the people,

for the maintenance and assertion of which they must themselves contend: and this experience was repeated when, in place of Napoleon, the allied powers began to take the lead in the affairs of Europe. They also in their commencement appeared to have learnt a lesson from experience, and to have desired to restore tranquillity to the world by redoubled care for the national independence and rational freedom of the people. But the lesson of experience was soon forgotten in the use of power, and virtuous intentions failed in practice. States and people, for whose independence they had fought, were gambled for at the Congress of Vienna, and they conferred them on one another, according to their pleasure or interest. They had promised constitutional freedom to France, Spain, Poland, Prussia, to every state of Germany; but at the first indication that the people desired to make use of their constitutions, liberty was suppressed, and their promises forgotten.

SECTION V.

Review of Modern History. — The Movements of the People in the Nineteenth Century. — Russia and her Stability. — The Movements of the Age; their power and instinctive character. — Universality of the Democratic Principle, and its application to all nations. — Its course obedient to Law. — The Prospects of Freedom. — France. — Germany.

FROM this time the history of the nineteenth century forms an exact antithesis to that of the eighteenth century, whose reforms, emanating from crowned heads, had called forth a corresponding movement in the whole of this quarter of the world. The spirit of the French Revolution, which had interrupted those reforms, continued to spread throughout Europe. A series of political revolutions had taken place, and even infected America; sometimes fortunate, sometimes the reverse — now making a retrograde movement, and now again resumed. They were however no longer revolutions decreed by ministers and princes, but produced by agitation among the people, while the re-action, which had formerly emanated from them, now proceeded from the princes. These movements acted in two ways: at home they were the occasion of free political institutions, and abroad they preserved the independence of the people and races according to the natural boundaries of nation and language. The two great attempts made by Napoleon in his universal empire, to suppress freedom at home, and to violate the independence of nations abroad, weigh yet so heavily upon this century, that all the great events of the last ten years seem but as counteracting forces to check the continuance or prevent the recurrence of these experiments. Thus the movements of the age and of the people act in a twofold manner with reference to both the greatest events of the preceding twenty-five years, viz. the French Revolution, and its effort to procure emancipation for her liberties at home, and the wars of freedom, with their aim at establishing

national boundaries and the international independence of the people.

The wars of freedom which overthrew the power of Napoleon, particularly those of Spain and Germany, mark the period when all nations, except France, awoke to political consciousness. The people of every country hoped, by acquiring independence abroad, to obtain freedom at home. They had taken up arms for the injured princes, in the belief that their gratitude (as Jovellanos expressed himself to Sebastiani) might induce them to abolish those abuses which had been the cause of the misery which had befallen them. The insurgents of the South American colonies, therefore, took the side of the princes of Europe in the wars of freedom in Spain. They only strove at first to shake off the dreadful oppression within their country, but were driven by the ill-timed resistance of the Spanish Central Junta of 1811 into the first declaration of independence (Manifesto of Venezuela), in which they, like the Americans in the north, appealing to the spirit of the age, justified their act of separation by the natural equality of man. The wars of freedom in South America influenced the expedition of the army of Cadiz, 1820, to stir up a revolt against the throne in favour of those popular institutions which had been restored by the self-sacrificing energy of the people. This was the commencement of the determination to effect political reforms, in spite of every impediment; and the land, which had suffered the longest from the burdens of the feudal system and from the severest despotism of princes, hoped to succeed in establishing a new order of affairs. All the Romanic states of the South (with the exception of France), Portugal, Naples, and Piedmont, were affected by the movements of this period; but the combined powers of Austria and Russia had no difficulty in repressing attempts at insurrection in Italy, and in a certain degree guided the counsels of France, and obliged her to suppress the Spanish Revolution.

Among other results, the movements in Spain had been the occasion of the insurrection in Greece, which had been long prepared by her intellectual and material improvement, by French delusions, and Russian intrigues, and which the general excitement hastened to a crisis. This semi-barbarous nation happily ranged itself on the side of the Christian and

human sympathies of Europe; although late in time, and labouring under physical and moral disabilities, she yet succeeded in defeating the wiles of diplomacy, whose concord was first interrupted by the outbreak here and in Portugal. The cause of Greece, whose importance was from the commencement justly appreciated by Austria, helped to rouse Europe from the political apathy in which she had sunk after her exhaustion from the great movements of the past years: it exercised a powerful influence on the state of politics in Europe, particularly in France. Without this excitement, the events of 1830 would hardly have had the great results which began to make the eastern alliance of absolute powers despair in their work of the suppression of all free spirit in the people, and which for fifteen years they had carried on so successfully.

The Revolution of July was then the commencement of an era full of hope. It dissolved the apathetic spell by which the artful politics of Austria and Russia had hitherto bound Europe. The attention of England was roused to the French campaign in Spain—to the movements of Austria, which were intended to reach America—and to Russia's connexion with the policy of the Bourbons; and she insisted on a pause in the headlong course of re-action. France once more took her position among the continental nations, resumed her natural alliances, and in her home government returned to the lost principles of her Revolution. The insurrection of July gave an impulse to the new events which roused Spain; it had its influence in carrying through the Reform Bill in England, gave democracy to Switzerland, separated Belgium from Holland, and roused Poland to insurrection. Even in Germany, where the character of the people, their partition into many states, the oppressive proximity of the eastern alliance of princes, made almost every movement impossible, a few rapid reforms succeeded in those states where the moral rather than the political feelings had been roused by corrupt princes or governments.

The general excitement of Europe was everywhere directed towards internal freedom or national independence, and in most cases to both; but the last is the most remarkable feature in the calm progress of public affairs, when every effort

was made to obtain independence of nation and of race. South America divided herself into small states; Turkey separated more and more into her native elements, all her provinces awoke to genuine life; Egypt and Syria attempted, in an Oriental fashion, to obtain their independence. In Spain, the old spirit of the race of the Basque country was aroused, as that of Sicily in Italy. Ireland urged the Repeal, and Schleswig-Holstein strove to assert her independence. A political life began in Hungary; the Sclavonians, Illyrians, and the Bohemians in Austria, the Poles in Posen, began to ferment in new movements. The spirit of resistance infected the whole of the non-Germanic elements of Austria which were opposed to the system of her government, and were eager for separation and for the dissolution of the tie which bound them to the Austrian empire. In opposition to the received doctrines of the day which endeavoured to efface all difference of peoples, an effort was everywhere made to mark the varieties of race by language and customs, to shake off the foreign yoke, to produce a freedom favourable to national life, and which might exist under many forms of state; indeed, whatever may appear contradictory in the spirit of modern history is in fact only its manifestation under another form. Whilst those states which had been artificially combined fell apart, those portions of the federal states which had been detached endeavoured to obtain a greater unity. By the same law, those which had been unnaturally united strove to separate, and those which had been unnaturally divided to reunite.

Switzerland in 1830 vainly struggled for greater unity, which she suddenly obtained by the new impulse given in the Paris Revolution of February 1848. Germany and Italy, following this impulse, then made their first effort for national unity, but this time also without success. The innovations introduced, and the immense efforts put forth, in these two attempts, vie in importance with the results of the Parisian movements of 1848; as two of the Eastern states belonging to the Holy Alliance were shaken to their inmost foundations by the concussion which for the first time reached them in this revolution, and one of them was menaced with the loss of her dominions in Italy and Hungary. Of the

three powers in the South, which, in the first centuries of our era, gave the greatest impulse to the events of modern times, the success of the revolutions within their states in these days, follows according to their internal weakness—in Spain, her colonies were successful. Turkey suffered several smaller losses, and the attempt to divide Austria was frustrated. In spite of these failures, the movements of the people of this century, whether in the south-east or in the north-west, have opened a new field to history, on which they will for long exhibit their energies, and from which the monarchical principle has received a blow where it appeared to be most secure—the most severe, not from the movement against monarchy, but from the deeds of monarchy itself. In the centre of European movements, even in France, the king, the fourth in the space of sixty years, fell, and the monarchy was destroyed—the Republic returned with the severest principles of the Revolution; excited spirits meditated more extravagant theories and reforms, which led to a re-action expected by few. A riddle is left to the future which many despair of solving, or whose solution men seek according to their various wishes and inclinations, and expect to find in opposite ways or in meanings which contradict one another.

Considered in one point of view, it may appear as if these movements and their aims were destined to be wrecked amidst the order and stability of all existing institutions. Where the result of this stability has been the establishment of freer political institutions, as in the Romanic nations of the south-west, we may argue for its beneficial effects as in Spain, or even for the chance of its duration as in Portugal. Even in France the Revolution of July has produced no genuine constitution, and that of February led still less to republican freedom. All that these movements to establish national boundaries have effected, has been, the separation of the Spanish colonies from the mother country, and the independence of Belgium and Greece; even these results, the victories of the weakest countries, are less to be attributed to the exertions of the liberated people themselves, than to the casual advantages of geographical position, and can be best explained by the interest taken in them by great states, such as England. To balance these successes, Hungary, Poland,

Sicily, Lombardy, and Schleswig-Holstein are again subjugated, the Republic of France has fallen, and the attempts at unity in Germany and Italy have failed. The Eastern alliance of princes remains victorious over the Revolution which has swept through their dominions. The Triumvirate of these closely confederated states for whose common interests the common robbery of Poland was conceived, are hostilely disposed towards the people, and are resolved by their internal policy to overcome the resistance to their interests from abroad, and even the jealousy of their power. They seem both in stability and importance far to surpass the Triumvirate of Western Europe, which, without any compact among themselves, is composed of three states, rivalling each other in power and industry; of which two are guided by entirely different constitutions, and the third oscillates backwards and forwards between different forms of government. In the confederation of Eastern Europe, the Russian empire extends over two quarters of the world; her nationality is unimpaired and uninfected to the core by the movements which have shaken Europe. She has lately secured the dependence of Austria on herself, by her assistance against Hungary, and she has always had a dependent in Prussia since she entered upon her inheritance of Napoleon's universal empire. The heavy counterpoise to all the beneficial political institutions which Napoleon scattered over Europe, and which he wrecked on the scheme of founding the predominance of France, was, that he appears to have resigned or rather bequeathed the future of the world to Russia. In the peace of Tilsit he purchased the alliance of this powerful friend, which he used against England on the continent, by yielding Finland to her, and, as far as lay in his power, bestowing on her the principedoms of the Danube; for her pleasure he left Poland still dismembered, and, unmindful of the advice of Talleyrand, to create a counterpoise to Russia, by increasing the territories of Austria along the Danube, he encouraged her presumption, and added to the influence of her too powerful state: he had by these means promoted the growth of this enormous power, when his own kingdom, which could alone control it, fell to the ground. The Russian empire has met with the same good fortune in the wide range of past centuries as in these later times. Founded

by Peter the Great, when the power of France was at its height (though immediately afterwards it sank as deeply as it had risen), Russia increased rapidly to a gigantic size under Catherine II. by the robbery of Poland and by the war with Turkey. England had just begun to increase her territories in the East Indies, but was soon after engaged in the war by which she lost America, when Russia added to her power by the last partition of Poland. The Republican arms of France were everywhere victorious, till she encountered, for the first time, an opponent equal to herself in the Czar, whose power reached its climax while favoured by Napoleon at a time when his great empire alone could present a counterpoise to it in Europe. His empire, however, was soon divided and fallen, and owed its fall chiefly to the opposition and efforts of Russia. During these four centuries, the two powers of England and France, who, united, could have arrested this enormous growth, were engaged in wars of the bitterest hostility against one another. The strong as well as the feeble monarchs of France, her republican Jacobins, and her despotic emperor, had rivalled one another in playing into the hands of their more distant enemies in Europe while resisting the national enemy.

As if the progress of freedom was destined to be guarded from all superficial haste, we are to-day menaced with a universal dominion, the chains of which would fetter both education and liberty. Its danger is the more imminent, as it no longer proceeds from the Catholic Romanic nations, which have more and more partaken of the Teutonic spirit, but from the Slavonic people of the Greek church, hostile to the culture and religion of every European race. They are rude masses dwelling in inhospitable regions which rather invite to desertion than settlement; masses which are pliable in the hand of a despot and conqueror, agreeing in one form of religion, and whose single ruler, the Czar, is possessed of that united secular and spiritual power which has been so earnestly coveted by those monarchs who aimed at universal dominion in the west of Europe. That which makes the danger still more alarming is, that a Pan-Slavonic literature and policy maintains a feeling in the race hostile to Europe, the desire of forming one great community, of a vocation to renew the world's history, to restore the youth of

an over-refined society, and threatens to convert the encounter of two political principles into one great war of races. But this is still not all the means by which Russia aspires to extend her boundaries; the same favourable circumstances may be observed in her geographical position as in her government, race, and religion. Russia has already deprived Turkey of her great possessions in Asia, and has natural allies in all who profess the Greek faith in the East. If an opportunity offers by which she can seize on Turkey, besides this invaluable acquisition in her rear, she would possess, by the revival of an impoverished country, a connected empire of incalculable resources, and a far more available and extended power than Spain or England ever owned in their colonies.

But taking another point of view our fears of danger may be assuaged, when we recall the experience of the past, and even of modern history. That in which Napoleon, in France, with Frenchmen, and connected with half Europe, could not succeed, Russia would find still more difficult; still less need we fear that Austria, divided into many nations, and only maintained by subalterns and officials, could again attempt the system of *dépayser*, of a compound state, of a great central empire; a system which failed under the ablest rulers, soldiers, and statesmen, with a united people; which miscarried even under the noble Joseph; and which the power of Napoleon, assisted by the influence of the amiable Josephine, vainly attempted. Universal dominion can only prosper on the ruins of fallen states, and when the strength of the people is completely exhausted. But we may easily be deceived with regard to the age of Europe and its supposed degeneration. This quarter of the world from time to time reproduces great, unemployed, and healthy forces, and is renovated and refreshed by the alternate efforts of its various members, although it may not yet, as an entirety, have reached the acme of its political development. Hitherto the fruits of European civilization (its political and spiritual enlightenment and commercial industry and wealth, which creates both) have been a well-spring of power and patriotism, rather than of enervating luxury and venality. But these virtues and this power, so long as they are not effaced by the predomi-

nance of evil, and by weakness, can only be suppressed by races who can meet the European people on an equal footing, and who are possessed of equal virtues. Even the most gifted among the Slavonic races have shown little capacity for such an achievement. The Bohemians in Germany attempted an ecclesiastical reformation, but their strength failed in a contest with a people rejoicing in a higher civilization. The Poles, when most favourably circumstanced, applied to Calvin for advice about their reformation, but he soon suspected the serious intentions of the nobles, and indeed the earnest desire for a change in the whole nation. Bohemia also attempted a revolution, and in a propitious time endeavoured to obtain from Austria a political existence; but she could not succeed. The Poles consulted Rousseau on the change in their constitution, as they had consulted Calvin about their reformation, and at a period when no power offered them any impediment, but they delayed its fulfilment until the French revolution gave the pretext for the most disgraceful of political crimes. Russia has even attempted less than this little. None here have yet ventured to speak aloud on the want of freedom, of religious inquiry, and the means of progress. The nobles have never yet attempted as a body to give an aristocratic form to the state. The development of the middle and commercial classes is neither supported by public nor by local energies. The state has not really advanced beyond the position of an Oriental despotism. If the question of the civilization of Eastern Europe should ever arise, the path to it will not be opened by Russia, but rather civilization itself must open a path in Russia. But experience does not speak as forcibly in reply to the inquiry concerning the influence of Western Europe, and its power to resist the free movements of the people. The Eastern confederation of princes stands on the defensive, yet the only effective agents in history are those which act on the offensive. The re-actionary league of 1814, though victorious, and with all Europe in its train, could not obliterate the whole advantages gained by the French revolution. Later on, when allied with the Bourbons, and with all the strength of France on their side, the powers of Europe ventured between 1820 and 1830 on aggressive measures, but they trembled at their own boldness when the finger of Can-

ning pointed to the popular strength which England could assemble under the banner of her liberties, and their success was swept away and became lost labour by the successes of the three days of July 1830. Not an attempt was then made against the self-instituted power of the French people, and the absolutist throne-recruiters of the Pyrenean Peninsula (the intriguers for the Spanish marriages) had, at the utmost, only gold by which to support their projects. It was not till France could become a party to it that the princes, in 1848, could summon courage to make a second attack on Switzerland, but the Revolution of February this time terrified them back within the lines of defence. Experience has proved that these ever-recurring movements in France have given a precedent and impulse to Europe which none dare to retaliate although attacked on their own hearth. The dynastic policy has the prior advantage of being able to calculate, observe, and make use of those political circumstances which the excited masses do not comprehend, and by which their efforts are often rendered fruitless; to balance this, every tide of popular agitation of this century has brought with it a certain gain for the cause of freedom, of which no ebb of re-action can again deprive it. The conservative powers watch the alienation of the public mind with prudent foresight, and gain advantages which may last for years from the relaxation of the exertions of the people, but which may be as suddenly lost by the movements of a day. The antithesis of the East and of the West, of the maxims of policy hostile or advantageous to the people, have thriven under these perpetual frictions, and attained a surprising degree of clearness and knowledge, which alone seems to proclaim an approaching great decision. Napoleon foresaw that, with the return of the Bourbons, and the position of these powers hostile to freedom, the cause of the kings and the people would be again brought into collision, and would only require a spark to kindle once more the general conflagration; and in two words of opposite tendencies, which now pass from mouth to month, he pronounced the object and the significance of the struggle.* But by the fact of the subject being one of general discussion, stability itself seems to

* En cinquante ans le monde sera ou républicain ou Cosaque.

resign its cause as lost. This is not only actually expressed in every defence of conservatism, but even acknowledged by the very advocates of its policy, the instigators of the strife, who already, in 1827, confessed that they had learned from the spirit of history that they could no longer hope, even with all the majesty and strength of their leaders, and in spite of all the victories they had gained in individual cases, to vanquish the spirit of the age, since neither skill nor power could stop the wheel of fortune. The most famous actors in this drama carry on the struggle confessedly only for the term of their lives. Their resistance wholly depends on the casualty of a fragile life, and on that of particular persons, or at the utmost on the union of certain states which are inwardly separated from one another by a perpetual contradiction of interests. Viewed from another side, the tenacious and uninterrupted existence of the people, and the progressive spirit of history, unite nations for a common end, without the necessity of forming alliances. The instrument by which it acts is the strong incitement of enormous masses, who require no urgent haste to obtain their desires, and to whom the present moment is often dangerous, but for whom time is ever a faithful ally.

The power of the movements of this century lies in three peculiarities: they have proceeded from the instincts of great masses—their aim is at once general and the same—and they pursue a course in accordance with a natural law; a certain pledge that eventually they must be irresistible.

The movements of the age have proceeded from the instincts of the masses. It is the chief characteristic of the history of our days that the great influence of individuals, whether in the position of rulers or in that of private life, is scarcely perceptible. No really pre-eminent mind has stepped forward to attract the particular attention of cotemporaries since Napoleon—no really great character has appeared to take up the cause of the people, or to become the champion of the struggles of the age.* History will tell of a few generals who have adopted certain of Napoleon's views in the conduct of war, but the inimitable in him has still remained the same. The great statesmen who followed him, even in England and America, are dead, and their successors are of immeasurably

* See Note at the end, p. 137.

smaller dimensions. A few distinguished literary and scientific characters have lived into this time, but their birth and education belonged to the past. In mechanical arts, the application and adaptation of the power of steam is a peculiar merit of the age, but the first impulse was given by its discovery, and belongs to a period that is gone by. The creative powers are few; but the number and success of the results of prior inventions is immense. The more prominent features of history, which proceed from men of eminence, are wanting in the present day. The lesser convulsions, though frequent, are without the terrible excitement occasioned by the contending forces of the first French Revolution. Though wars are numerous, scarcely a distinguished battle has been fought, scarcely a man has appeared of sufficient ability to excite great interest. Compared with the age of Napoleon, ours, in spite of many up-heavings, will leave the impression of a deep and general exhaustion and weariness, which seems the natural consequence of the violent efforts and shocks of the past; and even when compared with the eighteenth century, before the parallel of the French Revolution could be drawn, we are destitute in remarkable men. Our age is entirely wanting in the exciting story of the lives and deeds of princes, statesmen, warriors, authors—such as belonged to the eighteenth century. The attraction of the history of former days is purchased at the disheartening price of inaction among the people, beside great individuals, to whom they only furnished the material which the leading men of the age used for their purposes. On the contrary, in the present day, as in the sixteenth century, the people move in masses, and in all their various parts and grades. It is the peculiarity which makes the greatness of our times: the pre-eminence of highly gifted minds has decreased, but the number of gifted minds of a secondary capacity is so much the more on the increase; the reputation of this century does not depend as much on the quality and high cultivation of the individual, as on the quantity, the extent, the spread of cultivation among the many. Nothing great or sublime has lately proceeded from individuals, but there is a great and sublime change in the aspect of public life, since the history of this age will no longer be only a relation of the lives of great men and of princes, but a biography of nations.

The movements in the masses of European peoples are divided and slow, and their progress interrupted and impeded, because they are such great and unequally formed masses; but the preparation for the future is widely diffused, and, if the results are of a kind for the moment to discourage the eager and impatient, the promises of the age are so great and so confident, that even the most fainthearted rouse themselves to the belief that a time has arrived in which it is a privilege to live. If it is not an age of deep investigation, of high mental culture, it is at least one when the wide diffusion of civilization answers to the external condition of man. As the great events and discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries formerly promoted, so practical science and mechanical arts (the results of the combinations of many powers and experiments) now promote the education and prosperity of the ever-increasing masses of the people. The confirmation of the truths in natural history concerning the heavens and the earth, acts like the Reformation in confining superstition and ignorance within a more limited space. Steam-engines, railroads, and telegraphs, in the same manner as the art of printing and the science of navigation formerly, produce an acceleration, diffusion and common interest in every step of progress which overcomes time and space for the benefit of general civilization. Never was the connexion of all parts of the earth so complete, the means of interchange and of communication so rapid and general, knowledge so widely spread, the opportunities of education so accessible, the industry of men so great, wealth, comfort, enjoyment, and ease of life so general, but also never so universally coveted, as in these days. The activity in every department of domestic life is communicated to public life, and the masses even begin to have an influence in politics. With confidence (which is peculiar to the instinct of the multitude) they advance claims to benefit themselves and to satisfy their own wants, unstartled by the superior wisdom of theorists; and maintain them with the simple perseverance belonging to a full comprehension of their own interests, unterrified by the resistance and temporary victories of their opponents. They demand from the state the care for the general weal rather than for that of the few; and they support their claims more and more, daily, on a ground whose truth is as evident to the clear-

sighted as it is dangerous to those who are blind to it, and which was preached by the first Calvinistic teachers of political doctrine—that there may be states without princes, but never without a people.

These demands are common to all nations, and the aim of all their movements is the same; not that they must necessarily lead to the same form of government, or proceed from the same idea of policy. The exact copy of the states of ancient Greece and Rome has (however the reader of history may regret it) become impossible in the sight of the new idea of a state which has been realized in America. No one would suppose it possible that the exclusively national institutions of England could pass over to the Continent, though it is clear to every one that the democratic ideas, which move the world, are gradually penetrating into England. The feeling of individuality and personal importance has become too strong in mankind not to loosen their respect for political institutions—not to dissolve exclusive corporations of governments within governments—not to equalize all differences of caste and class. The struggle for equality in all the relations of life, for the liberty of man from the dominion of man, is necessarily founded on the consciousness of the importance of the individual. But political equality, if it does not mean equal subjugation to a despotism, acknowledges the sovereignty of the people's will, expressed by a majority; it stipulates for a government, not founded upon the delusion of divine right, but upon necessity; claims a legislation derived from the wants of society, and which is confirmed by the sentence of the community at large. According to these popular ideas, all the forms and institutions of the state and of society in this age hasten irresistibly towards one common interest and progress, as if the powers of fate co-operate to give form and body to an historical idea.

The conflict of these times has produced the efforts of a fourth class to rise. The great historical question now is, whether this effort is only temporary, and prematurely forced into existence to serve the purposes of man, or whether it may be recognised as a Providential decree to which it would be wise to bow.

When in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the power of the chivalric aristocracy was hardly yet established, the middle

class, in separate and confederated municipalities, became their rival, but only met with occasional success. Centuries passed away before they could maintain their position as entitled to political power in the greater states. They have not even yet, everywhere, obtained their rights, and their natural rival already rises against them, in exactly the same manner as they once stood up in opposition to the class of nobles; the fourth class aims at reaching the level of the third, and, united with it, to shake off the yoke of the upper classes and even the power of the prince. Can this be only a temporary convulsion, like the insurrections in the towns of the thirteenth century, like Jacquerie and the wars of the peasantry? Will the fourth, like the middle class, require centuries yet to develop their political importance, and to give them their just position? But the movements of this era are not occasioned, like that above mentioned, by individual cases of oppression and misery, but are the results of a unanimous feeling. Ever since the different quarters of the world have so nearly approached one another, that the part played by the European races before the rest of mankind is universally known, the value of the human being is better understood; the Europeans form a common aristocracy, which spread their dominion over the globe, and in whose social existence the man in the humblest position counts himself equal with the greatest, since he, more than any, has contributed to this extension of power; he has given himself for it, and furnished the means for the exercise of commerce. He assigns this as a justification of his present ambition. The Past and the Present have cleared away the difficulties which lay in the way of his aspirations, and have bestowed on him those active energies, in a fulness of measure which breaks down all the props of resistance. We have seen the progress of history in its course through many centuries, always labouring towards the greater equality of man, and of his relations in life. The armed nobility destroyed their own power in crusades, and later on in private warfare. The spiritual aristocracy disappeared in Protestant countries, where the clergy of the middle class found themselves among their equals. Absolutism, the importance of the judicature, the necessity of employing men of education to manage the complicated

business of modern states, helped to equalize society. Improvements in the art of war gave greater importance to the common man. The discovery of the New World, commerce, and navigation were given expressly for the benefit of the middle class. In them and in the monarchy lies now the best strength to resist the pressure from below. But since the French Revolution monarchy has lost the power of its spell. Since the restoration of the Bourbons she has lost the confidence of the people by their general forfeiture of their word, in which they had promised to maintain the rights of the nation. Its latest deeds have withdrawn from it many of its last moral supports. There is even scarcely a prospect of a revival of its own energies. In despotic monarchies, that which James I. called kingcraft seems to be forgotten. At the same time the middle class has seldom proved itself capable of political rule. As a separate body it is neither ambitious, nor has it the leisure for the occupation, nor the inclinations or habits to assert its political position with the hand of power. To which may be added that they are far more dependent upon the fourth class, and separated by a much narrower channel from it, than they themselves were formerly from the nobles.

If the varieties of class, political institutions and forms, scarcely impede the democratic tendencies of the age, the greatest encouragement is at the same time offered to it by the example of existing states and governments. Three great states rival each other in power under three different constitutions. Absolutism in Russia has drawn upon her the hatred of the whole civilized world. The constitutional government of England is beyond the reach of almost every state. The democratic constitution of America is the choice of the people. This state grew unobserved in the far West, and came forth from its obscurity just as Russia reached her full maturity in the East; they attained to historical importance at the same time; Napoleon raised Russia to the acme of her greatness, and America purchased from him the power of displaying her strength on a wider field, and opposing her popular influence to the dynastic despotic influence of Russia. The aspect of this rapidly unfolding, free, happy state, without a king, aristocracy, or state church, has a wonderful attraction

to the people of all nations, and exercises a direct influence over them, which, though at first little noted, is now too powerful to be stopped in its onward course. Its fortunes attract the attention of the people of Europe, who are wearied with their worn-out institutions; and by the facility of constant intercourse, tidings of the most prosperous among the emigrants is rapidly spread among the lowest classes of society. To this propagandism, which has never been sufficiently appreciated, may be added the active exertions of literature, which has become proportionably democratic throughout Europe. Numbers from the educated classes, who earn their daily bread by this literature, extend a hand in sympathy to those below them, and assist at the work of democracy. Besides which, the exiles of despotism, the homeless Poles, Hungarians, and Italians, form a still more extensive and systematic propagandism. Their maxims, however aristocratic their leaders may be, are by necessity democratic, because they need the masses, and know of no middle class in their homes; they are (as the Jesuits once were) in a general confederation with all people destitute of rights, and of institutions which have a claim to their respect; but with this difference, that they seek after a progressive, not a retrogressive aim, for the defence of a popular and not of a despotic cause. Monarchical policy has nothing but an uninfluential dependent part of the press to maintain its moral power on the field, against this united and equal force, capable of the most marvellous political co-operation; the provincial assemblies, from which alone a practical political education could have been derived, have been suppressed and undermined, and even where they have the semblance of existence, have lost the confidence of the people and become useless, because they have only a semblance. The field is therefore left open to democratic principles. They progress in every path; in the violent one of revolution, where in the agrarian law of the doctrines of socialism they have received their most terrific watchword; still more effectually along the quiet pathway of ideas and habits which undermine power. More and more they influence the thoughts of men. Revived usages, the political opinions and practice of individuals and of governments, even of those which are opposed to democracy, are all governed by it. The changes in property, the equal right

of inheritance, educational institutions open to all, facility of intercourse, everything tends to the approximation of classes; the most opposite qualities and inclinations combine to assist in the elevation of the lower orders. The mediocrity of literary productions, a consequence of the increased demand for intellectual food, has lowered the standard of talent in the writers, and at the same time of the class of readers. Luxury and the taste for enjoyments stimulate the poor to vie with the rich. Malice has whispered in the ear of conservatism to extend a hand to the lowest, against the middle class; and again, the philanthropy of man has endeavoured in a thousand ways to relieve and elevate the humbler orders of the people—by Sunday and infant schools, savings-banks and poor-laws. The emancipation of all the oppressed and suffering is the vocation of the century, and the force of this idea has been victorious over mighty interests and deeply-rooted institutions, which may be perceived in the abolition of serfdom and villainage in Europe, and in the liberation of the slaves in the West Indies. This is the great feature of the time. The strength of belief and conviction, the power of thought, the force of resolution, a clear view of the object pursued, endurance and self-sacrifice, are all enlisted on the side of the people, and give this historical movement the character of a Divine ordinance, which cannot be resisted.

It is the same character which we recognize in the course of the law, which we trace in all the movements of the age. The history we propose to narrate is divided into three movements, which appear to be impelled by a higher power, and every time shake a great part of Europe to its foundation. They follow one another almost in geometric progression. The insurrection in Cadiz happened five years after the great peace from which we date the present time; the July Revolution ten years later; and the February Revolution eighteen years from that period. If a fresh concussion is postponed, it would, by the same law and in the same manner, occur between the years eighty and ninety of this current century. It is worthy of note that this has been the epoch which in every century of our modern era has brought freedom for the people: in France and America in the eighteenth, in England in the seventeenth, in the Netherlands in the sixteenth, in Switzerland in the fifteenth, and even in Bo-

hemia in the fourteenth century. We may attribute these relations of time, as well as those in the history of our lives, to mere accident. But even that which is taking place among the sympathizing nations of the present day may be calculated upon in the same ratio. The revolutions of twenty years in the Romanic states of the South were conspiracies of soldiers, in which the people exhibited little interest. The July Revolution proceeded from the Second Chamber of Parliament, and was a victory of the middle class. In 1848 the people themselves rose, even where a republic was not their ultimate object. The same gradual progress may be traced in the countries over which the Revolution passed. The shock from Spain did not spread beyond the South of Europe. The Revolution of July burst over France, Belgium, a part of Germany, Spain, and England, who were all borne along in its vortex. The year 1848 carried the same storm over Italy, Prussia, and Austria, which, till then, had appeared immovable. It reached nations there which alone can shake the powers of Eastern Europe. And finally, the same geometrical progression which we have observed in time, people, and country, prevails also in the direction of the movement itself. The course of freedom, we have seen, has, since the Reformation, been chiefly in the region of the North, among the Teutonic races, until it reached America, where it found its natural limits. From that time it took a retrograde course towards the East: its landing in France was difficult to effect; the whole of the East of Europe, and even the free West, opposed the new importation—but it secured its first footing. The movements of twenty years passed over from South America to Spain, from Italy to Greece, in regular progression towards the East. The Revolution of July procured a soil for freedom in France, and it breathed again in Spain, in Belgium, and in Old England; it endeavoured even to reach Poland. In the year 1848 the Continent was shaken to its centre, and the Revolution penetrated the strongholds of Conservative Principle, even as far as the Niemen and Dniester. In this history we shall, above all, trace the hand of Providence in these movements. The resources of the United States sufficing for their own supply, and their refusing all other nations the right of occupation in America, will in time restrict the amount of emigration from Europe, and

limit the commerce of the West ; and in an equal proportion the increasing decay of the East will invite to a renewal of the ancient commerce and civilization of Asia. To effect this, the freedom of the continental nations of Europe is required, if the advantages which these prospects open are not to be lost to those whom they most concern.

The eastern course of European victories for freedom, which history seems everywhere to predict, will be fulfilled. It is impossible to tell the number of impediments, the opposition, and prostrations it may endure before that time arrives. A regular order of events is prescribed to the general course of history, but in their particular aspects much is left to the arbitration of man, and ample space is allowed for the display of his various powers. Whether the republic or the monarchy, the constitutional or democratic form of government, will succeed ; whether a free state is only in preparation, or whether it will be firmly established ; whether the fourth class will maintain its rights and enforce its institutions beside those of the other classes of society, or whether it will conform to theirs, or with them be dissolved into one equal social form ;—all this must be decided by the degrees of capability of the other classes, by their political power, and the wisdom or folly of their resistance. The great developments of this remarkable era will principally depend on two nations—France and Germany.

We have seen France driven hither and thither for centuries between her Teutonic and Celto-Romanic elements, vacillating between Catholicism and Protestantism, religion and freethinking, superstition and atheism, rudeness and excess of refinement, remaining behind at one moment and hurrying forward the next. In the state, her institutions border now on absolutism, now on anarchy ; she seeks for help from the upper classes when it can only reach her from below, and assistance from the lower orders when she can only find it from the union of all ; she cherishes despotic institutions under every form of government, and yet is in the habit of exercising insurrection as a right ; she is not constant to monarchy, not faithful to the constitution, and not prepared for a republic. The latest schools of her revolutionary statesmen vacillate in their inclinations as much as the whole history of France—always in alternate extremes,

always in a strange contradiction of means and ends. They endanger freedom by an excess of equality, and equality by an excess of freedom; they everywhere betray as much hatred of as necessity for authority; they seek for an exaggerated measure of freedom, and subject all at last to a new Roman dictatorship or papacy. Their motto is—All by the people; their practice—Nothing for the people. They would dissolve all the institutions of the state, and require for that purpose a power greater than that of Sparta; they aim at a progress beyond any which has yet been seen, while striving for a communism which only belongs to savage nations or exists in Russia and Egypt; they proclaim the brotherhood of nations, and are opposed to that which even the wild animal protects—property and family; they have Christianity ever in their mouths, and celebrate the orgies of murder and rapine; they aim to found a new and perpetual order of affairs by means of the barbarous refuse of the people; they arm themselves with great ideas while they are degraded by the lowest vices; they would stride over the gulf which separates the defective reality from a possible perfection, which they think to obtain by pouring in the vapour of impossible chimæras. In this attitude of affairs, the leading men of France are themselves disputing whether, as Lamartine asserts, the forces of the nation are vigorous and youthful, or whether, as Guizot maintains, Mirabeau and Barnave, Napoleon and La Fayette were in the right, when they despaired of the future of France, as of a body decayed by age. It is now a question whether France shall, like Italy in the time of Macchiavelli, sink under the weight of a political curse—and, in that spirit which nothing can satisfy, prove herself as incapable of obedience as of freedom. It must be decided, if Teutonic institutions will prevail, which can alone procure her freedom secured by law; or whether, in spite of the immense sacrifice of her revolutions, she shall sink back into the stagnation of the Romanic states, out of which Spain and Italy appear now on the point of struggling to raise themselves. And we venture to pronounce that on this decision hangs a still greater, as it will decide the tranquil and well-ordered, or wild and stormy development of future history.

With as many doubts we behold the future of our people,

in the present aspect of affairs in Germany. From her earliest history she has been robbed of her best forces. She has sent out her most vigorous sons in numbers, in crusades and expeditions for Rome, and whole tribes have emigrated to people the Slavonic lands. She has purchased the renovation of the world by her own exhaustion, which continues to the present day in emigrations, and the costly exportation of men and money, impoverishing and weakening the mother-country. Thus, when the discovery of America opened a new career to the people, she could no longer take any part in the external movements of the world. Her most energetic neighbours in the west, Switzerland and the Netherlands, fell away from her ; her greatest powers in the east, Prussia and Austria, only maintained the ground they already possessed ; the rest, an infirm and dismembered body, continued passive, to be played upon by the active and energetic. The situation and disposition of the land were too inviting not to be coveted by both those mighty powers ; and it therefore was never the secure possession of either ; it was too well adapted to the development of their strength not to alarm the world and cause all the rest of Europe to unite to prevent a combination of favouring circumstances. Our fate appeared to be that of all divided nations, and that we, like Judea, Greece, and modern Italy, should form a cosmopolitan country, and be satisfied with the moral benefits we had bestowed on the human race. If this great feature of our national life, which undoubtedly denotes the character of the people, seems to extinguish every patriotic hope within us, the enigma of history presents another equally great feature beside it, which bids these hopes rear their heads proudly again. The history of Germany from the time of the Reformation has followed the same regular course, though slower, than that of England and France. It has led us by religious freedom, viz. the Reformation, and moral freedom, viz. the literature of the past century, to the threshold of the freedom of the state, and permitted us to hope that we may even still obtain that freedom, in a measure proportionate to the preparations we have made to receive it. And if we look back on the entire history of Germany, and compare the present day with its early beginnings, we may feel still

greater encouragement to hope. If England, as we have said before, passed through the different phases of her development in various degrees of perfection, the same progress, although in another way, has taken place in Germany. We have called the period of the Anglo-Saxon patriarchal kings richer and more important than any other in England; and if we might venture to point out the period in German history to which it most nearly corresponds, it would be that of the first Hohenstaufen; which, while the Imperial Power had still weight in Europe, was even richer, greater, and more distinguished. We have said that the English aristocracy had a greater capacity for government than any other, but the German aristocracy, while they maintained the peace of the land under their chiefs, and at other times protected the despotic power of the monarch against the same chiefs, who attained to the rule of sovereign princes, evinced, though in a different way from the English, that they possessed an equal capacity for government, and with it a greater strength than was to be found anywhere else. English despotism laid the foundation of much good and little evil in a wonderfully favoured monarchical state. Absolutism could entail fewer advantages, but also fewer disadvantages, on a divided country like Germany. These elements, absolutism and aristocracy, have not been organized in Germany as in England, but the aristocracy has paralyzed, and in fact abolished the empire. If the institution of democracy could follow that of aristocracy, as the aristocracy followed the period of the empire, without occasioning any great or exhausting disorders, the history of Germany would continue its even course of modest greatness in enviable security. This cannot be the case in a dismembered people, unaccustomed to act for themselves; and even were it possible, its progress could only be slow, under many relapses and delusions. It can hardly succeed without foreign aid, and without a combination of fortunate times and circumstances. When it does take place (and we may trust much to the determined and healthy nature of the people that it will), then Germany will occupy the important position hitherto held by France. In this position she will be even more unable and more unwilling than England to play the part of a conquering state. The aim of her policy will

rather be to dissolve the great monarchies into Federal states, which would combine the advantages of both great and small states, and offer a secure pledge for universal freedom and for the peaceful dissemination of every kind of knowledge.

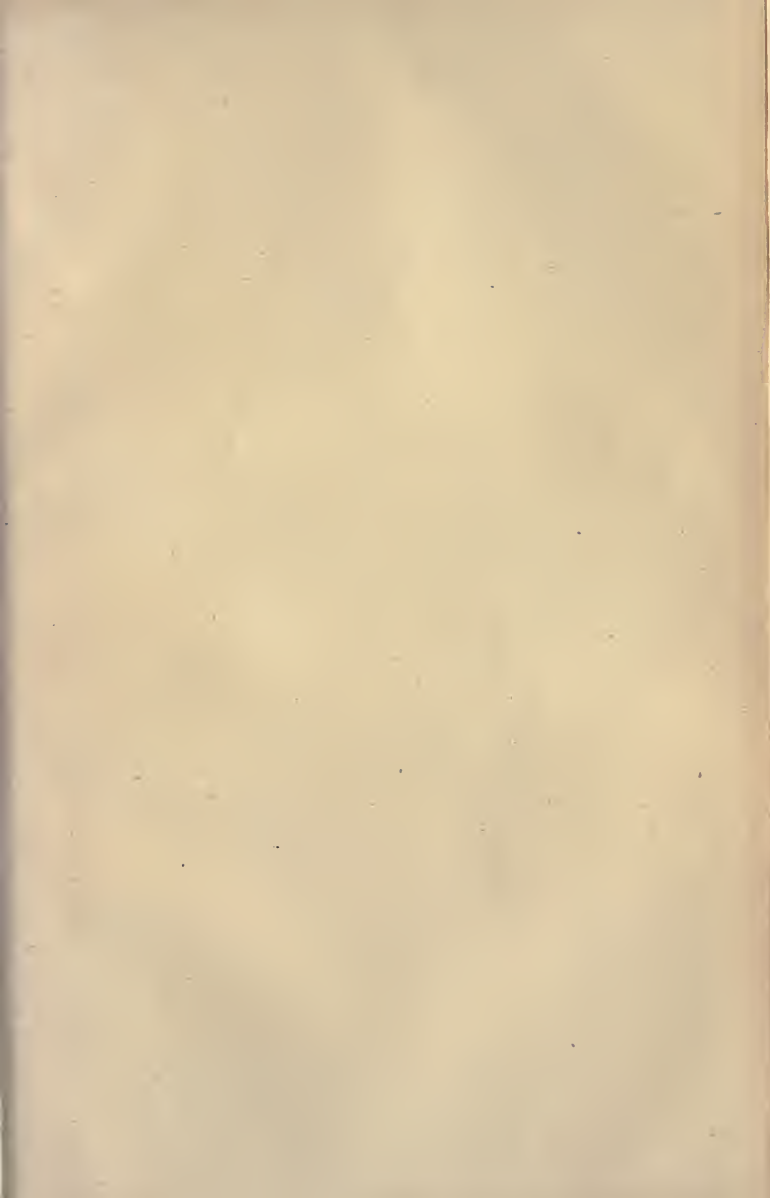
NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

IN this summary of the great events of the century, Professor Gervinus has almost entirely omitted all mention of the most remarkable—the Hungarian struggle of 1848. Various reasons may perhaps be assigned for this omission, besides the present political state of Germany, and the geographical position of Hungary, remote from those nations which have hitherto taken the most prominent part in European history. It may not therefore appear irrelevant here to remind the reader of this treatise that in 1848 nine millions of serfs received their entire manumission by the *unanimous* consent of the Hungarian people, including the nobles, who thus made a voluntary sacrifice of their privileges; that at the same time a fair representation of the people of all classes of society, the trial by jury, a just and equal taxation, and the free exercise of religion by every denomination of Christians were granted; and that these great reforms were effected by the Hungarians themselves, without appealing to arms, or the overthrow of existing institutions, but by the peaceful and legitimate exercise of the rights of their representatives; and received the assent by oath, and by signature of their lawful king, Ferdinand V., Emperor of Austria. Ferdinand was forced to resign his crown, by those who could not prevail on him to infringe his oath to his Hungarian subjects; and they who deposed the late emperor sent an invading army into Hungary, who looked to the genius of her greatest living statesman, Louis Kossuth, for means by which to resist this unexpected attack. The following lines, in reference to the conduct of the war, were received by the translator from the distinguished Hungarian commander General Kinèty:—"A great nation, in the progress of the development of its political life, desired to see itself provided with a responsible ministry, at the moment when

“ called upon for the most noble exercise of the powers of its
“ constitution. Without arms, unprepared for war, surrounded
“ by hostile neighbours, forsaken by their Palatine, the Hun-
“ garian people confided in the creative genius of Louis
“ Kossuth to find means by which to meet the invader. The
“ Austrians were beaten back on every side, and could
“ only overcome these patriotic exertions by the assistance
“ of 200,000 Russians, and would not even then have
“ succeeded, but for the treachery of Görgey, and the
“ silence by which Europe, as a spectator, countenanced the
“ deed. We, who have witnessed the great achievements
“ of Kossuth, and of Hungarian valour, cannot but hope that
“ a later and a calmer period will do more justice to this
“ brave people. — GEORG KINÈTY.” The great victories
won and the scenes enacted in the war of Hungary, the skill
of her generals, and the heroism of her people, have already
been recorded in the work of General Klapka. But Louis
Kossuth (who, by his disinterested virtues, dauntless courage
under the severest moral as well as physical trials, and mar-
vellous resources in almost unparalleled difficulties, rises
superior to the calumnies which are diligently circulated
concerning him), his friend Louis Batthiany, the brave
General Bem, are names which will stand in history beside
those of the greatest of the past, and may at least redeem our
century from the charge preferred against it by Professor
Gervinus, that “ no really great character has appeared to take
up the cause of the people, or to become the champion of the
age.”

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Lessons of Past Times

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